Magick Without Tears

By Aleister Crowley

Foreword

By Karl J. Germer

In 1943 Aleister Crowley met a lady who, having heard of his wide knowledge and experience, asked his advice on occult, spiritual, and practical matters.

This chance connection resulted in a stimulating exchange of letters. Crowley then asked others to put similar questions to him. The result was this collection of over eighty letters which are now being issued over the title that he chose, “MAGICK WITHOUT TEARS.”

Crowley did not keep copies of his early letters to the above-mentioned lady, so was unable to include them in the collection that he planned to publish. Fortunately they have been preserved and are now included in the introduction to this book. Their original form has been retained with the opening and closing formulae which Crowley used in all his letters.

Crowley at first intended to call the book “ALEISTER EXPLAINS EVERYTHING”, and sent the following circular to his friends and disciples asking them to suggest subjects for inclusion.

ALEISTER EXPLAINS EVERYTHING.

“Much gratified was the author of THE BOOK OF THOTH to have so many letters of appreciation, mostly from women, thanking him for not 'putting it in unintelligible language', for 'making it all so clear that even I with my limited intelligence can understand it, or think I do.'

“Nevertheless and notwithstanding! For many years the Master Therion has felt acutely the need of some groundwork-teaching suited to those who have only just begun the study of Magick and its subsidiary sciences, or are merely curious about it, or interested in it with intent to study. Always he has done his utmost to make his meaning clear to the average intelligent educated person, but even those who understand him perfectly and are most sympathetic to his work, agree that in this respect he has often failed.

“So much for the diagnosis—now for the remedy!

“One genius, inspired of the gods, suggested recently that the riddle might be solved somewhat on the old and well-tried lines of 'Dr. Brewer's Guide to Science'; *i.e.*, by having aspirants write to the Master asking questions, the kind of problem that naturally comes into the mind of any sensible enquirer, and getting his answer in the form of a letter. 'What is it?' 'Why should I bother my head about it?' 'What are its principles?' 'What use is it?' 'How do I begin?', and the like.

“This plan has been put into action; the idea has been to cover the subjects from every possible angle. The style has been colloquial and fluent; technical terms have either been carefully avoided or most carefully explained; and the letter has not been admitted to the series until the querent has expressed satisfaction. Some seventy letters, up to the present have been written, but still there seem to be certain gaps in the demonstration, like those white patches on the map of the World, which looked so tempting fifty years ago.

“This memorandum is to ask for your collaboration and support. A list, indicating briefly the subject of each letter already written, is appended. Should you think that any of those will help you in your own problems, a typed copy will be sent to you at once … Should you want to know anything outside the scope, send in your question (stated as fully and clearly as possible) … The answer should reach you, bar accidents, in less than a month … It is proposed ultimately to issue the series in book form.”

This has now been done.

Karl J. Germer
Frater Saturnus X°
Frater Superior, O.T.O.
January, 1954 e.v.
Hampton, N.J.

Introduction

Letters written by the Master Therion to a Student

Letter No. A

March 19, 1943

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law

I was very glad to gather from your conversation yesterday afternoon that you have a serious intention of taking up the Great Work in the proper spirit. Your criticisms of previous experience in the course of your adventures appeared to be singularly sane and just. As I promised I am writing this letter to cover a few practical points which we had not time to discuss and which in any case I think it better to arrange by correspondence.

1) It is of the first importance that you should understand my personal position. It is not actually wrong to regard me as a teacher, but it is certainly liable to mislead; fellow-student, or, if you like, fellow-sufferer, seems a more appropriate definition.

The climax of my life was what is known as the Cairo Working, described in the minutest detail in *The Equinox of the Gods*. At that time most of The Book of the Law was completely unintelligible to me, and a good deal of it—especially the third chapter—extremely antipathetic. I fought against this book for years; but it proved irresistible.

I do not think I am boasting unfairly when I say that my personal researches have been of the greatest value and importance to the study of the subject of Magick and Mysticism in general, especially my integration of the various thought-systems of the world, notably the identification of the system of the *Yi King* with that of the Qabalah. But I do assure you that the whole of my life's work, were it multiplied a thousand fold, would not be worth one tithe of the value of a single verse of *The Book of the Law*.

I think you should have a copy of *The Equinox of the Gods* and make *The Book of the Law* your constant study. Such value as my own work may possess for you should amount to no more than an aid to the interpretation of this book.

2) It may be that later on you will want a copy of *Eight Lectures on Yoga* so I am putting a copy aside for you in case you should want it.

3) With regard to the O.T.O., I believe I can find you a typescript of all the official documents. If so, I will let you have them to read, and you can make up your mind as to whether you wish to affiliate to the Third Degree of the Order. I should consequently, in the case of your deciding to affiliate, go with you though the script of the Rituals and explain the meaning of the whole thing; communicating, in addition, the real secret and significant knowledge of which ordinary Masonry is not possessed.

4) The horoscope; I do not like doing these at all, but it is part of the agreement with the Grand Treasurer of the O.T.O. that I should undertake them in worthy cases, if pressed. But I prefer to keep the figure to myself for future reference, in case any significant event makes consultation desirable.

Now there is one really important matter. The only thing besides *The Book of the Law* which is in the forefront of the battle. As I told you yesterday, the first essential is the dedication of all that one is and all that one has to the Great Work, without reservation of any sort. This must be kept constantly in mind; the way to do this is to practice Liber Resh vel Helios, sub figura CC, pp. 425-426 - *Magick*. There is another version of these Adorations, slightly fuller; but those in the text are quite alright. The important thing is not to forget. I shall have to teach you the signs and gestures which go with the words.

It is also desirable before beginning a formal meal to go through the following dialogue: Knock 3-5-3: say, "Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law." The person at the other end of the table replies: "What is thy Will?" You: "It is my Will to eat and drink." He: "To what end?" You: "That my body may be fortified thereby." He: "To what end?" You: "That I may accomplish the Great Work." He: "Love is the law, love under will." You, with a single knock: "Fall to." When alone make a monologue of it: thus, Knock 3-5-3. Do what, etc. It is my Will to, etc., that my body, *etc*., that I may, *etc*., Love is, *etc*. Knock: and begin to eat.

It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of performing these small ceremonies regularly, and being as nearly accurate as possible with regard to the times. You must not mind stopping in the middle of a crowded thoroughfare—lorries or no lorries—and saying the Adorations; and you must not mind snubbing your guest—or your host—if he or she should prove ignorant of his or her share of the dialogue. It is perhaps because these matters are so petty and trivial in appearance that they

afford so excellent a training. They teach you concentration, mindfulness, moral and social courage, and a host of other virtues.

Like a perfect lady, I have kept the tit bit to the last. It is absolutely essential to begin a magical diary, and keep it up daily. You begin by an account of your life, going back even before your birth to your ancestry. In conformity with the practice which you may perhaps choose to adopt later, given in Liber Thisarb, sub figura CMXIII, paragraphs 27-28, *Magick*, pp. 420-422, you must find an answer to the question: "How did I come to be in this place at this time, engaged in this particular work?" As you will see from the book, this will start you on the discovery of who you really are, and eventually lead you to your recovering the memory of previous incarnations.

As it is difficult for you to come to Town except at rare and irregular intervals, may I suggest a plan which has previously proved very useful, and that is a weekly letter. Eliphas Lévi did this with the Baron Spedalieri, and the correspondence is one of the most interesting of his works. You ask such questions as you wish to have answered, and I answer them to the best of my ability. I, of course, add spontaneous remarks which may be elicited by my observations on your progress and the perusal of your magical diary. This, of course, should be written on one side of the paper only, so that the opposite page is free for comments, and an arrangement should be made for it to be inspected at regular intervals.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

Letter No. B

April 20, 1943

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law

I was very glad to have your letter, and am very sorry to hear that you have been in affliction. About the delay, however, I think I ought to tell you that the original Rule of the Order of A∴ A∴ was that the introducer read over a short lection to the applicant, then left him alone for a quarter of an hour, and on coming back

received a “yes” or “no.” If there was any hesitation about it the applicant was barred for life.

The reason for the relaxation of the rule was that it was thought better to help people along in the early stages of the work, even if there was no hope of their turning out first-class. But I should like you to realize that sooner or later, whether in this incarnation or another, it is put up to you to show perfect courage in face of the completely unknown, and the power of rapid and irrevocable decision without without counting the cost.

I think that it is altogether wrong to allow yourself to be worried by “psychological, moral, and artistic problems.” It is no good your starting anything of any kind unless you can see clearly into the simplicity of truth. All this humming and hawing about things is moral poison. What is the use of being a woman if you have not got an intuition, an instinct enabling you to distinguish between the genuine and the sham?

Your state of mind suggests to me that you must have been, in the past, under the influence of people who were always talking about things, and never doing any real work. They kept on arguing all sorts of obscure philosophical points; that is all very well, but when you have succeeded in analyzing your reactions you will understand that all this talk is just an excuse for not doing any serious work.

I am confirmed in this judgment by your saying: “I don't know if I want to enter into a great conflict. I need peace.”“ Fortunately you save yourself by adding: “Real peace, that is living and not stagnant.” All life is conflict. Every breath that you draw represents a victory in the struggle of the whole Universe. You can't have peace without perfect mastery of circumstance; and I take it that this is what you mean by “living, not stagnant.”

But it is of the first consequence for you to summon up the resolution to stamp on this sea of swirling thoughts by an act of will; you must say: “Peace be still.” The moment you have understood these thoughts for what they are, tools of the enemy, invented by him with the idea of preventing you from undertaking the Great Work—the moment you dismiss all such considerations firmly and decisively, and say: “What must I do?” and having discovered that, set to work to do it, allowing of no interruption, you will find that living peace which (as you seem to see) is a dynamic and not a static condition. (There is quite a lot about this point in Little Essays Toward Truth, and also in *The Vision and the Voice*.)

Your postscript made me smile. It is not a very good advertisement for the kind of people with whom you have been associated in the past. My own position is a very simple one. I obeyed the injunction to "buy a perfectly black hen, without haggling." I have spent over 100,000 pounds of my inherited money on this work: and if I had a thousand times that amount today it would all go in the same direction. It is only when one is built in this way, to stand entirely aloof from all considerations of twopence halfpenny more or fourpence halfpenny less, that one obtains perfect freedom on this Plane of Discs.

All the serious Orders of the world, or nearly all, begin by insisting that the aspirant should take a vow of poverty; a Buddhist Bhikku, for example, can own only nine objects—his three robes, begging bowl, a fan, toothbrush, and so on. The Hindu and Mohammedan Orders have similar regulations; and so do all the important Orders of monkhood in Christianity.

Our own Order is the only exception of importance; and the reason for this is that it is much more difficult to retain one's purity if one is living in the world than if one simply cuts oneself off from it. It is far easier to achieve technical attainments if one is unhampered by any such considerations. These regulations operate as restrictions to one's usefulness in helping the world. There are terrible dangers, the worst dangers of all, associated with complete retirement. In my own personal judgment, moreover, I think that our own ideal of a natural life is much more wholesome.

When you have found out a little about your past incarnations, you should be able to understand this very clearly and simply.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

Letter No. C

April 30, 1943

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law

Thank you for your long letter of no date, but received two days ago. I am very sorry you are still feeling exhausted. I am not too good myself, for I find this

weather very trying. I will answer your various points as best I can.I am arranging to send you the official papers connected with the O.T.O., but the idea that you should meet other members first is quite impossible. Even after affiliation, you would not meet anyone unless it were necessary for you to work in cooperation with them. I am afraid you have still got the idea that the Great Work is a tea-party. Contact with other students only means that you criticize their hats, and then their morals; and I am not going to encourage this. Your work is not anybody else's; and undirected chatter is the worst poisonous element in human society.

When you talk of the "actual record" of the "Being called Jesus Christ," I don't know what you mean. I am not aware of the existence of any such record. I know a great many legends, mostly borrowed from previous legends of a similar character.

It would be better for you to get a copy of *The Equinox of the Gods* and study it. The Great Work is the uniting of opposites. It may mean the uniting of the soul with God, of the microcosm with the macrocosm, of the female with the male, of the ego with the non-ego—or what not.

By "love under will" one refers to the fact that the method in every case is love, by which is meant the uniting of opposites as above stated, such as hydrogen and chlorine, sodium and oxygen, and so on. Any reaction what- ever, any phenomenon, is a phenomenon of "love", as you will understand when I come to explain to you the meaning of the word "point-event". But love has to be "under will," if it is to be properly directed. You must find your True Will, and make all your actions subservient to the one great purpose.

Ra-Hoor is the Sun God; Tahuti is the Egyptian Mercury; Kephra is the Sun at midnight.

About your problems; what I have to do is to try to teach you to think clearly. You will be immensely stimulated by having all the useless trimmings stripped from your thinking apparatus. For instance, I don't think you know the first principles of logic. You apparently take up a more or less Christian attitude, but at the same time you like very much the idea of Karma. You cannot have both.

The question about money does not arise. This old and very good rule (which I have always kept) was really pertinent to the time when there were actual secrets. But I have published openly all the secrets. All I can do is to train you in a perfectly exoteric way. My suggestion about the weekly letter was intended to

exclude this question, as you would be getting full commercial value for anything paid.

Your questions about the Spirit of the Sun, and so on, are to be answered by experience. Intellectual satisfaction is worthless. I have to bring you to a state of mind completely superior to the mechanism of the normal mind.

A good deal of your letter is rather difficult to answer. You always seem to want to put the cart before the horse. Don't you see that, if I were trying to get you to do something or other, I should simply return you to the kind of answer which I thought would satisfy you, and make you happy? And this would be very easy to do because you have got no clear ideas about anything. For one thing, you keep on using terms about whose significance we are not yet in agreement. When you talk about the "Christian path," do you believe in vicarious atonement and eternal damnation—or don't you? A great deal of the confusion that arises in all these questions, and grows constantly worse as fellow-students talk them over—the blind leading the blind—is because they have no idea of the necessity of defining their terms.

Then again, you ask me questions like "What is purity?" that can be answered in a dozen different ways; and you must understand what is meant by a "universe of discourse." If you asked me—"Is this sample of cloride of gold a pure sample?" I can answer you. You must understand the value of precision in speech. I could go on rambling about purity and selflessness for years, and no one would be a penny the better.

P.S.—or rather, I did not want to dictate this bit—Your ideas about the O.T.O. remind me of some women's idea of shopping. You want to maul about the stock and then walk out with a proud glad smile: NO. Do you really think that I should muster all the most distinguished people alive for your inspection and approval?

The affiliation clause in our Constitution is a privilege: a courtesy to a sympathetic body. Were you not a Mason, or Co-Mason, you would have to be proposed and seconded, and then examined by savage Inquisitors; and then—probably—thrown out on to the garbage heap. Well, no, it's not as bad as that; but we certainly don't want anybody who chooses to apply. Would you do it yourself, if you were on the Committee of a Club? The O.T.O. is a serious body, engaged on a work of Cosmic scope. You should question yourself: what can I contribute?

Secrets. There is one exception to what I have said about publishing everything: that is, the ultimate secret of the O.T.O. This is really too dangerous to disclose; but the safeguard is that you could not use it if you knew it, unless you were an advanced Adept; and you would not be allowed to go so far unless we were satisfied that you were sincerely devoted to the Great Work. (See *One Star in Sight*). True, the Black Brothers could use it; but they would only destroy themselves.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

Letter No. D

June 8, 1943

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law

Thanks for your letter. I couldn't find the O.T.O. typescript—and then it struck me that it would be useful to await your reactions. If I were expecting some presumably important papers by post, I should get anxious after 24 hours delay (at most) and start enquiries. Anyhow, I can't find them for the moment; but Mr. Bryant said he would lend you his *Blue Equinox*: pages 195-270 give what you require.

But the real point of your affiliating is that it saves me from constantly being on my guard lest I should mention something which I am sworn not to reveal. As in every serious society, members are pledged not to disclose what they may have learnt, whom they have met; it is so, even in Co-Masonry: isn't it: But one may mention the names of members who have died. (See Liber LII, par. 2.) Be happy then; the late X… Y… was one of us. I hope that he and Rudolph Steiner will (between them) satisfy your doubts.

The A∴A∴ is totally different. *One Star in Sight* tells you everything that you need to know. (Perhaps some of these regulations are hard to grasp: personally, I can never understand all this By-Law stuff. So you must ask me what, and why, and so on.)

There is really only one point for your judgment. “By their fruits ye shall know them.” You have read *Liber LXV* and *Liber VII*; That shows you what states you can attain by this cirriculum. Now read “A Master of the Temple” (*Blue Equinox*, pp. 127-170) for an account of the early stages of training, and their results. (Of course, your path might not coincide with, or even resemble, his path.)

But do get it into you head that “If the blind lead the blind, they shall both fall into the ditch.” If you had seen 1% of the mischief that I have seen, you would freeze to the marrow of your bones at the mere idea of seeing another member through the telescope! Well, I employ the figure of hyperbole, that I admit; but it really won't do to have a dozen cooks at the broth! If you're working with me, you'll have no time to waste on other people.

I fear your “Christianity” is like that of most other folk. You pick out one or two of the figures from which the Alexandrines concocted “Jesus” (too many cooks, again, with a vengeance!) and neglect the others. The Zionist Christ of Matthew can have no value for you; nor can the Asiatic “Dying-God”—compiled from Melcarth, Mithras, Adonis, Bacchus, Osiris, Attis, Krishna, and others—who supplied the miraculous and ritualistic elements of the fable.

Rightly you ask: “What can I contribute?” Answer: One Book. That is the idea of the weekly letter: 52 of yours and 52 of mine, competently edited, would make a most useful volume. This would be your property: so that you get full material value, perhaps much more, for your outlay. I thought of the plan because one such arrangement has recently come to an end, with amazingly happy results: they should lie open to your admiring gaze in a few months from now. Incidentally, I personally get nothing out of it; secretarial work costs money these days. But there is another great advantage; it keeps both of us up to the mark. Also, in such letters a great deal of odds and ends of knowledge turn up automatically; valuable stuff, frequent enough; yes, but one doesn't want to lose the thread, once one starts. Possibly ten days might be best.

But please understand that this suggestion arose solely from your own statement of what you thought would help in your present circumstances. Anyway, as you say, decide! If it is yes, I should like to see you before June 15 when I expect to go away for a few days; better to give you some groundwork to keep you busy in my absence.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

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Letter No. E

Aug. 18, 1943

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law

Much thought has gone into the construction of your Motto. “I will become” can be turned neatly enough as “Let there be;” by avoiding the First Pronoun one gets the idea of “the absorption of the Self in the Beloved,” which is exactly what you want.

“The creative Force of the Universe” is quite ready-made. Πυραμις, a pyramid, is that Force in its geometrical form; in its biological form it is Φαλλος, the Yang or Lingam. Both words have the same numerical value, 831. These two words can therefore serve you as the secret object of your Work. How than can you construct the number 831?

The Letter Kaph, Jupiter (Jehovah), the Wheel of Fortune in the Tarot—the Atu X is a picture of the Universe built up and revolving by virtue of those Three Principles: Sulphur, Mercury, Salt; or Gunas: Sattvas, Rajas, Tamas—has the value 20. So also has the letter Yod spelt in full.

One Gnostic secret way of spelling and pronouncing Jehovah is IAΩ and this has the value 811. So has “Let there be,” Fiat, transliterating into Greek.

Resuming all these ideas, it seems that you can express your aspiration very neatly, very fully, by choosing for your motto the words FIAT YOD.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

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P.S. Please study this letter, and these explanatory figures and meditate upon them until you have fully assimilate not only the matter under immediate consideration, but the general method of Qabalistic research and construction. Note how new cognate ideas arise to enrich the formula.

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Note: In the "explanatory figures" referred to (omitted in the printed edition) Crowley spelt out the various Greek and Hebrew words mentioned with the numbers by each letter to indicate how they added to these values. Where this edition, following the printed version, gives the names of Hebrew letters in English transliteration, the original had the actual Hebrew letters.

Letter No. F

Aug. 20, 1943

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law

Let me begin by referring to my letter about the motto and make clear to you the working of this letter.

In this motto you have really got several ideas combined, and yet they are really, of course, one idea. Fiat, being 811, is identical with IAO, and therefore FIAT YOD might be read not only as "let there be" (or "Let me become"), the secret source of all creative energy, but as "the secret source of the energy of Jehovah." The two words together, having the value of 831, they contain the secret meanings Pyramis and Phallos, which is the same idea in different forms; thus you have three ways of expressing the creative form, in its geometrical aspect, its human aspect, and its divine aspect. I am making a point of this, because the working out of this motto should give you a very clear idea of the sort of way in which Qabalah should be used. I think it is rather useful to remember what the essence of the Qabalah is in principle; thus, in your correspondence for Malkuth, Yesod, and Hod you are simply writing down some of the ideas which pertain to the numbers 10, 9, and 8 respectively. Naturally, there is a great deal of redundancy and overloading as soon as you get to ideas important enough to be comprehensive; as is mentioned in the article on the Qabalah in *Equinox* Vol. I, No. 5, it is quite easy to prove 1 = 2 = 3 = 4, *etc*.

On the other hand, you must be careful to avoid taking the correspondences given in the books of reference without thinking out *why* they are so given. Thus, you find a camel in the number which refers to the Moon, but the Tarot card "the Moon" refers not to the letter Gimel which means camel, but to the letter Qoph,

and the sign Pisces which means fish, while the letter itself refers to the back of the head; and you also find fish has the meaning of the letter Nun. You must not go on from this, and say that the back of your head is like a camel—the connection between them is simply that they all refer to the same thing.

In studying the Qabalah you mention six months; I think after that time you should be able to realize that, after six incarnations of uninterrupted study, you may realize that you can never know it; as Confucius said about the *Yi King*. "If a few more years were added to my life, I would devote a hundred of them to the study of the *Yi*."

If, however, you work at the Qabalah in the same way as I did myself, in season and out of season, you ought to get a very fair grasp of it in six months. I will now tell you what this method is: as I walked about, I made a point of attributing everything I saw to its appropriate idea. I would walk out of the door of my house and reflect that door is Daleth, and house Beth; now the word "dob" is Hebrew for bear, and has the number 6, which refers to the Sun. Then you come to the fence of your property and that is Cheth—number 8, number of Tarot Trump 7, which is the Chariot: so you begin to look about for your car. Then you come to the street and the first house you see is number 86, and that is Elohim, and it is built of red brick which reminds you of Mars and the Blasted Tower, and so on. As soon as this sort of work, which can be done in a quite lighthearted spirit, becomes habitual, you will find your mind running naturally in this direction, and will be surprised at your progress. Never let your mind wander from the fact that your Qabalah is not my Qabalah; a good many of the things which I have noted may be useful to you, but you must construct your own system so that it is a living weapon in your hand.

I think I am fair if I say that the first step on the Qabalah which may be called success, is when you make an actual discovery which throws light on some problem which has been troubling you. A quarter of a century ago I was in New Orleans, and was very puzzled about my immediate course of action; in fact I may say I was very much distressed. There seemed literally nothing that I could do, so I bethought myself that I had better invoke Mercury. As soon as I got into the appropriate frame of mind, it naturally occurred to me, with a sort of joy, "But *I am* Mercury." I put it into Latin—*Mercurius sum*, and suddenly something struck me, a sort of nameless reaction which said: "That's not quite right." Like a flash it came to me to put it into Greek, which gave me "Ερμης Ειμι" and adding that up rapidly, I got the number 418, with all the marvellous correspondences which had

been so abundantly useful to me in the past (See *Equ. of the Gods*, p. 138). My troubles disappeared like a flash of lightning.

Now to answer your questions seriatum; it is quite all right to put questions to me about *The Book of the Law*; a very extended commentary has been written, but it is not yet published. I shall probably be able to answer any of your questions from the manuscript, but you cannot go on after that when it would become a discussion; as they say in the law-courts, "You must take the witness' answer."

II. The Qabalah, both Greek and Hebrew, also very likely Arabic, was used by the author of *The Book of the Law*. I have explained above the proper use of the Qabalah. I cannot tell you how the early Rosicrucians used it, but I think one may assume that their methods were not dissimilar to our own. Incidentally, it is not very safe to talk about Rosicrucians, because their name has become a signal for letting loose the most devastating floods of nonsense. What is really known about the original Rosicrucians is practically confined to the three documents which they issued. The eighteenth century Rosicrucians may, or may not, have been legitimate successors of the original brotherhood—I don't know. But from them the O.T.O. derived its authority; The late O.H.O. Theodor Reuss possessed a certain number of documents which demonstrated the validity of his claim according to him; but I only saw two or three of them, and they were not of very great importance. Unfortunately he died shortly after the last War, and he had got out of touch with some of the other Grand Masters. The documents did not come to me as they should have done; they were seized by his wife who had an idea that she could sell them for a fantastic price; and we did not feel inclined to meet her views. I don't think the matter is of very great importance, the work being done by members of the Order all over the place is to me quite sufficient.

III. The Ruach contains both the moral and intellectual worlds, which is really all that we mean by the conscious mind; perhaps it even includes certain portions of the subconscious.

IV. In initiation from the grade of Neophyte to that of Zelator, one passes by this way. The main work is to obtain admission to, and control of, the astral plane.

Your expressions about "purifying the feelings" and so on are rather vague to enter into a scientific system like ours. The result which you doubtless refer to is attained automatically in the course of your experiments. Your very soon discover the sort of state of mind which is favourable or unfavourable to the work, and you also discover what is helpful and harmful to these states in your way of life. For

instance, the practice like the non-receiving of gifts is all right for a Hindu whose mind is branded for ten thousand incarnations by the shock of accepting a cigarette or a cup of tea. Incidentally, most of the Eastern cults fall down when they come West, simply because they make no allowance for our different temperaments. Also they set tasks which are completely unsuitable to Europeans—an immense amount of disappointment has been caused by failure to recognize these facts.

Your sub-questions a, b, and c are really answered by the above. All the terms you use are very indefinite. I hope it will not take too long to get you out of the way of thinking in these terms. For instance, the word "initiation" includes the whole process, and how to distinguish between it and enlightenment I cannot tell you. "Probation," moreover, if it means "proving," continues throughout the entire process. Nothing is worse for the student than to indulge in these wild speculations about ambiguous terms.

V. You can, if you like, try to work out a progress of Osiris through Amennti on the Tree of Life, but I doubt whether you will get any satisfactory result.

It seems to me that you should confine yourself very closely to the actual work in front of you. At the present moment, of course, this includes a good deal of general study; but my point is that the terms employed in that study should always be capable of precise definition. I am not sure whether you have my Little Essays Toward Truth. The first essay in the book entitled "Man" gives a full account of the five principles which go to make up Man according to the Qabalistic system. I have tried to define these terms as accurately as possible, and I think you will find them, in any case, clearer than those to which you have become accustomed with the Eastern systems. In India, by the way, no attempt is ever made to use these vague terms. They always have a very clear idea of what is meant by words like "Buddhi," "Manas" and the like. Attempts at translation are very unsatisfactory. I find that even with such a simple matter as the "Eight limbs of Yoga," as you will see when you come to read my *Eight Lectures*.

I am very pleased with your illustrations; that is excellent practice for you. Presently you have to make talismans, and a Lamen for yourself, and even to devise a seal to serve as what you might call a magical coat-of-arms, and all this sort of thing is very helpful.

It occurs to me that so far we have done nothing about the astral plane and this path of Tau of which you speak. Have you had any experience of travelling in the astral? If not, do you think that you can begin by yourself on the lines laid down

in Liber O, sections 5 and 6? (See *Magick*, pp. 387-9). If not you had better let me take you through the first gates. The question of noise instantly arises; I think we should have to do it not earlier than nine o'clock at night, and I don't know whether you can manage this.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

Letter No. G

Septmeber 4.

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law

"shall be" (instead of "Do what thou wilt is …") not "is." See *Liber AL*, I, 36, 54, and II, 54. Not "Master Perdurabo": see *Magick* p. XXIX. "Care Frater" is enough.

777 is practically unpurchaseable: copies fetch £10 or so. Nearly all important correspondences are in *Magick* Table I. The other 2 books are being sent at once. "Working out games with numbers." I am sorry you should see no more than this. When you are better equipped, you will see that the Qabalah is the best (and almost the only) means by which an intelligence can identify himself. And Gematria methods serve to discover spiritual truths. Numbers are the network of the structure of the Universe, and their relations the form of expression of our Understanding of it.[1)] In Greek and Hebrew there is no other way of writing numbers; our 1, 2, 3 etc. comes from the Phoenicians through the Arabs. You need no more of Greek and Hebrew than these values, some sacred words—knowledge grows by use—and books of reference.

One cannot set a pupil definite tasks beyond the groundwork I am giving you, and we should find this correspondence taking clear shape of its own accord. You have really more than you can do already. And I can only tell you what the right tasks—out of hundreds—are by your own reactions to your own study and practice.

"Osiris in Amennti"—see the *Book of the Dead*. I meant you might try to trace a parallelism between his journeyings and the Path of Initiation.

Astral travel—development of the Astral Body is essential to research; and, above all, to the attainment of "the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel."

You ought to demonstrate your performance of the Pentagram Ritual to me; you are probably making any number of mistakes. I will, of course, take you carefully through the O.T.O. rituals to III° as soon as you are fairly familiar with them. The *plan* of the grades is this:—

0°	Attraction to the Solar System
I°	Birth
II°	Life
III°	Death
IV°	"Exaltation"
P.I.	"Annihilation"
V°–IX°	Progressive comment on II° with very special reference to the central secret of practical Magick.

There is thus no connection with the A∴A∴ system and the Tree of Life. Of course, there are certain analogies.

Your suggested method of study: you have got my idea quite well. But nobody can "take you through" the Grades of A∴A∴. The Grades *confirm* your attainments as you make them; then, the new tasks appear. See *One Star in Sight*.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

Letter No. H

November 10–11. 11 p.m.–2 a.m.

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law

Yours of yestere'en came to gladden me just when the whole evening lay blank before me: the one job such a big job that I simply can't get down to it until I get help: How annoying! Still, yours the gain!

1. That verse (AL. I, 44) condenses the whole magical technique. It makes clear when you have understood it—the secret of success in the Great Work. Of course at first it appears a paradox. You must have an aim, and one aim only: yet on no account must you want to achieve it!!!

Those chapters of *The Book of Lies* quoted in my last letter[2)] do throw some light onto this Abyss of self-contradiction; and there is meaning much deeper than the contrast between the Will with a capital W, and desire, want, or velleity. The main point seems to be that in aspiring to Power one is limited by the True Will. If you use force, violating your own nature either from lack of understanding or from petulant whim, one is merely wasting energy; things go back to normal as soon as the stress is removed. This is one small case of the big Equation "Free Will = Necessity" (Fate, Destiny, or Karma: it's all much the same idea). One is most rigidly bound by the causal chain that has dragged one to where one is; but it is one's own self that has forged the links.

Please refrain from the obvious retort: "Then, in the long run, you can't possibly go wrong: so it doesn't matter what you do." Perfectly true, of course! (There is no single grain of dust that shall not attain to Buddhahood:" with some such words did the debauched old reprobate seek to console himself when Time began to take its revenge.) But the answer is simple enough: you happen to be the kind of being that thinks it does matter what course you steer; or, still more haughtily, you enjoy the pleasure of sailing.

No, there is this factor in all success: self-confidence. If we analyze this, we find that it means that one is aware that all one's mental and physical faculties are working harmoniously. The deadliest and subtlest enemy of that feeling is anxiety about the result; the finest gauze of doubt is enough to dim one's vision, to throw the entire field out of focus. Hence, even to be aware that there is a result in prospect must militate against that serenity of spirit which is the essence of self-confidence. As you will know, all our automatic physiological functions are deranged if one is aware of This then, is the difficulty, to enjoy consciously while not disturbing the process involved. The obvious physical case is the sexual act: perhaps its chief importance is just that it is a type of this exceptional spiritual-

mental condition. I hope, however, that you will remember what I have said on the subject in paragraphs 15–17 of my 3rd Lecture on *Yoga for Yellowbellies* (pp. 71-72); there is a way of obtaining ecstacy from the most insignificant physiological function. Observe that in transferring the whole consciousness to (say) one's little finger or big toe is not trying to interfere with the normal exercise of its activities, but only to realize what is going on in the organism, the exquisite pleasure of a function in its normal activity. With a little imagination one can conceive the analogical case of the Universe itself; and, still less fettered by even the mildest limitation which material symbols necessarily (however little) suggest, "Remember all ye that existence is pure joy; …" (AL, II, 9).

Is it too bold to suggest that the gradual merging of all these Ways into an interwoven unity may be taken as one mode of presentation of the Accomplishment of the Great Work itself?

At least, I feel fairly satisfied the meditation of them severally and jointly may help you to an answer to your first question.

2. Most people in my experience either cook up a hell-broth of self-induced obstacles to success in Astral traveling, or else shoot forth on the wings of romantic imagination and fool themselves for the rest of their lives in the manner of the Village Idiot. Yours, luckily, is the former trouble.

But—is it plain obstinacy?—you do not exercise the sublime Art of Guru-bullying. You should have made one frenzied leap to my dying bed, thrust aside the cohorts of Mourning Archimandrites, and wrung my nose until I made you do it.

And you repeatedly insist that it is difficult. It isn't. Is there, however, some deep-seated inhibition—a (Freudian) fear of success? Is there some connection with that sense of guilt which is born in all but the very few?

But you don't give it a fair chance. There is, I admit, some trick, or knack, about getting properly across; a faculty which one acquires (as a rule) quite suddenly and unexpectedly. Rather like mastering some shots at billiards. Practice has taught me how to communicate this to students; only in rare cases does one fail. (It's incredible: one man simply could not be persuaded that intense physical exertion was the wrong way to to it. There he sat, with the veins on his forehead almost on the point of bursting, and the arms of my favourite chair visibly trembling beneath his powerful grip!) In your case, I notice that you have got this practice mixed up with Dharana: you write of "Emptying my mind of everything except the one

idea, *etc*." Then you go on: "The invoking of a supersensible Being is impossible to me as yet." The impudence! The arrogance! How do you know, pray madam? (Dial numbers at random: the results are often surprisingly delightful!) Besides, I didn't ask you to invoke a supersensible (what a word! Meaning?) Being right away, or at any time: that supersensible is getting on my nerves: do you mean "not in normal circumstances to be apprehended by the senses?" I suppose so.

In a word: do fix a convenient season for going on the Astral Plane under my eye: half an hour (with a bit of luck) on not more than four evenings would put you in a very different frame of mind. You will soon "feel your feet" and then "get your sea-legs" and then, much sooner than you think

"Afloat in the aethyr, O my God! my God!" . . . . . "White swan, bear thou ever me up between thy wings!"

3. Now then to your old Pons Asinorum about the names of the Gods! Stand in the corner for half an hour with your face to the wall! Stay in after school and write Malka be-Tharshishim v-Ruachoth b-Schehalim 999 times!

My dear, dear, dear sister, a name is a *formula of power*. How can you talk of "anachronism" when the Being is eternal? For the type of energy is eternal.

Every name is a number: and "Every number is infinite; there is no difference." (AL I, 4). But one Name, or system of Names, may be more convenient either (a) to you personally or (b) to the work you are at. *E.g.* I have very little sympathy with Jewish Theology or ritual; but the Qabalah is so handy and congenial that I use it more than almost any—or all the others together—for daily use and work. The Egyptian Theogony is the noblest, the most truly magical, the most bound to me (or rather I to it) by some inmost instinct, and by the memory of my incarnation as Ankh-f-n-Khonsu, that I use it (with its Græco-Phoenician child) for all work of supreme import. Why stamp my vitals, madam! The Abramelin Operation itself turned into this form before I could so much as set to work on it! Like the Duchess' baby (excuse this enthusiasm; but you have aroused the British Lion-Serpent.)

Note, please, that the equivalents given in *777* are not always exact. Tahuti is not quite Thoth, still less Hermes; Mercury is a very much more comprehensive idea, but not nearly so exalted: Hanuman hardly at all. Nor is Tetragrammaton IAO, though even etymology asserts the identity.

In these matters you must be catholic, eclectic, even syncretic. And you must consider the nature of your work. If I wanted to evoke Taphthartharath, there

would be little help indeed from any but the Qabalistic system; for that spirit's precise forms and numbers are not to be found in any other.

The converse, however, is not so true. The Qabalah, properly understood, properly treated, is so universal that one can vamp up a ritual to suit almost “any name and form.” But in such a case one may expect to have to reinforce it by a certain amount of historical, literary, or philosophic study—and research.

4. Quite right, dear lady, about your incarnation memories acting as a “Guide to the Way Back.” Of course, if you “missed an Egyptian Incarnation,” you would not be so likely to be a little Martha, worried “about much serving.” Don't get surfeited with knowledge, above all things; it is so very fascinating, so dreadfully easy; and the danger of becoming a pedant—“Deuce take all your pedants! say I.” Don't “dry-rot at ease 'till the Judgment Day.”

No, I will NOT recommend a book. It should not hurt you too much to browse on condensed hay (or thistles) such as articles in Encyclopedias. Take *Roget's Thesaurus* or *Smith's Smaller Classical Dictionary* (and the like) to read yourself to sleep on. But don't stultify yourself by taking up such study too seriously. You only make yourself ridiculous by trying to do at 50 what you ought to have done at 15. As you didn't—tant pis! You can't possibly get the *spirit*; if you could, it would mean merely mental indigestion. We have all read how Cato started to learn Greek at 90: *but the story stops there*. We have never been told what good it did to himself or anyone else.

5. God-forms. See *Magick* pp. 378-9. Quite clear: quite adequate: no use at all without continual practice. No one can join with you — off you go again! No, no, a thousand times no: this is the practice par excellence where you have to do it all yourself. The Vibration of God-names: that perhaps, I can at least test you in. But don't you dare come up for a test until you've been at it—and *hard*—for at least 100 exercises.

I think this is your trouble about being “left in the air.” When I “present many new things” to you, the sting is in the tail—the practice that vitalizes it. Doctrinal stuff is fine “Lazily, lazily, drowsily, drowsily, in the noo-on-dye shaun!” An ounce of your practice is worth a ton of my teaching. GET THAT. It's all your hatred of hard work:

“Go to the ant thou sluggard!
Consider her ways and be——.”

I am sure that Solomon was too good a poet, and too experienced a Guru, to tail off with the anticlimax “wise.”

6. *Minerval*. What is the matter? All you have to do is understand it: just a dramatization of the process of incarnation. Better run through it with me: I'll make it clear, and you can make notes of your troubles and their solution for the use of future members.

7. *The Book of Thoth* Surely all terms not in a good dictionary are explained in the text. I don't see what I can do about it, in any case; the same criticism would apply to (say) Bertrand Russell's *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy*, wouldn't it?

Is x an R-ancestor of y if y has every R-hereditary that x has, provided x is a term which has the relation R to something or to which something has the relation R? (Enthusiastic cries of “Yes, it is!”) He says “A number is anything which has the number of some class.” Feel better now?

Still, it would be kind of you to go through a page or so with me, and tell me where the shoe pinches. Of course I have realized the difficulty long ago; but I don't know the solution—or if there is a solution. I *did* think of calling *Magick* “*Magick Without Tears*”; and I *did* try having my work cross-examined as I went on by minds of very inferior education or capacity. In fact, Parts I and II of *Book 4* were thus tested.

What about applying the Dedekindian cut to this letter? I am sure you would not wish it to develop into a Goclenian Sorites, especially as I fear that I may already have deviated from the δια παντος Hapaxlegomenon.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

Letter No. I

January 27, 1944

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law

It is very good hearing that these letters do good, but rather sad to reflect that it is going to make you so unpopular. Your friends will notice at once that glib vacuities fail to impress, and hate you, and tell lies about you. It's worth it.

Yes, your brain is quite all right; what is wanted is to acquire the habit of pinning things down instantly. (He says 're-incarnation'—now what *exactly* does he mean by that? He says “it is natural to suppose … ”: what is “natural”, and what is implied by supposition?) Practice this style of criticism; write down what happens. Within a week or two you will be astounded to discover that you have got what is apparently little less than a new brain! You must make this a habit, not letting anything get by the sentries.

Indeed, I want you to go even further; make sure of what is meant by even the simplest words. Trace the history of the word with the help of Skeat's *Etymological Dictionary*. E.g. “pretty” means tricky, deceitful; on the other hand, “hussy” is only “housewife.” It's amusing, too, this “tabby” refers to Prince Attab, the grandson of Ommeya—the silk quarter of Baghdad where utabi, a rich watered silk was sold. This will soon give you the power of discerning instantly when words are being used to hide meaning or lack of it.

About A∴A∴, etc.: your resolution is noble, but there is a letter ready for you which deals with what is really a legitimate enquiry; necessary, too, with so many hordes of “Hidden Masters” and “Mahatmas” and so on scurrying all over the floor in the hope of distracting attention from the inanities of their trusted henchmen.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

P.S. I must write at length about the Higher Self or “God within us,” too easy to get muddled about it, and the subject requires careful preparation.

666

1) He gives the numerical value of the letters of the Greek alphabet—not copied here. — ed.

2) A letter dated Oct. 12, '43 constituted No. 48 in Magick Without Tears, and the following chapters from the Book of Lies: “Peaches”, “Pilgrim-Talk”, “Buttons and Rosettes”, “The Gun-Barrel” and “The Mountaineer.”

Chapter 1

What is Magick?

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

What is Magick? Why should anyone study and practice it? Very natural; the obvious preliminary questions of any subject soever. We must certainly get all this crystal clear; fear not that I shall fail to set forth the whole business as concisely as possible yet as fully, as cogently yet as lucidly, as may prove within my power to do.

At least I need not waste any time on telling you what Magick is *not*; or to go into the story of how the word came to be misapplied to conjuring tricks, and to sham miracles such as are to this day foisted by charlatan swindlers, either within or without the Roman Communion, upon a gaping crew of pious imbeciles.

First let me go all Euclidean, and rub your nose in the Definition, Postulate and Theorems given in my comprehensive (but, alas! too advanced and too technical) Treatise on the subject.**1** Here we are!

I. DEFINITION:

MAGICK

is the Science and Art of causing Change to occur in conformity with Will.*

(Illustration: It is my Will to inform the World of certain facts within my knowledge. I therefore take “magical weapons,” pen, ink, and paper; I write “incantations”—these sentences—in the “magical language” *i.e.* that which is understood by people I wish to instruct. I call forth “spirits” such as printers, publishers, booksellers, and so forth, and constrain them to convey my message to those people. The composition and distribution is thus an act of

MAGICK

by which I cause Changes to take place in conformity with my Will.)

II. POSTULATE:

ANY required Change may be effected by application of the proper kind and degree of Force in the proper manner through the proper medium to the proper object.

(Illustration: I wish to prepare an ounce of Chloride of Gold. I must take the right kind of acid, nitro-hydrochloric and no other, in sufficient quantity and of adequate strength, and place it, in a vessel which will not break, leak or corrode, in such a manner as will not produce undesirable results, with the necessary quantity of Gold, and so forth. Every Change has its own conditions.

In the present state of our knowledge and power some changes are not possible in practice; we cannot cause eclipses, for instance, or transform lead into tin, or create men from mushrooms. But it is theoretically possible to cause in any object any change of which that object is capable by nature; and the conditions are covered by the above postulate.)

III. THEOREMS:

1. Every intentional act is a Magical Act.†

(*Illustration*: See "Definition" above.)

2. Every successful act has conformed to the postulate.

3. Every failure proves that one or more requirements of the postulate have not been fulfilled.

(*Illustrations*: There may be failure to understand the case; as when a doctor makes a wrong diagnosis, and his treatment injures his patient. There may be failure to apply the right kind of force, as when a rustic tries to blow out an electric light. There may be failure to apply the right degree of force, as when a wrestler has his hold broken. There may be failure to apply the force in the right manner, as when one presents a cheque at the wrong window of the Bank. There may be failure to employ the correct medium, as when Leonardo da Vinci found his masterpiece fade away. The force may be applied to an unsuitable object, as when one tries to crack a stone, thinking it a nut.)

4. The first requisite for causing any change is thorough qualitative and quantitative understanding of the condition.

(*Illustration*: The most common cause of failure in life is ignorance of one's own True Will, or of the means by which to fulfill that Will. A man may fancy himself a painter, and waste his life trying to become one; or he may be really a painter, and yet fail to understand and to measure the difficulties peculiar to that career.)

5. The second requisite of causing any change is the practical ability to set in right motion the necessary forces.

(*Illustration*: A banker may have a perfect grasp of a given situation, yet lack the quality of decision, or the assets, necessary to take advantage of it.)

6. **"Every man and every woman is a star." That is to say, every human being is intrinsically an independent individual with his own proper character and proper motion.**

7. Every man and every woman has a course, depending partly on the self, and partly on the environment which is natural and necessary for each. Anyone who is forced from his own course, either through not understanding himself, or through external opposition, comes into conflict with the order of the Universe, and suffers accordingly.

(*Illustration*: A man may think it his duty to act in a certain way, through having made a fancy picture of himself, instead of investigating his actual nature. For example, a woman may make herself miserable for life by thinking that she prefers love to social consideration, or vice versa. One woman may stay with an unsympathetic husband when she would really be happy in an attic with a lover, while another may fool herself into a romantic elopement when her only true pleasures are those of presiding at fashionable functions. Again, a boy's instinct may tell him to go to sea, while his parents insist on his becoming a doctor. In such a case, he will be both unsuccessful and unhappy in medicine.

8. A man whose conscious will is at odds with his True Will is wasting his strength. He cannot hope to influence his environment efficiently.

(*Illustration*: When Civil War rages in a nation, it is in no condition to undertake the invasion of other countries. A man with cancer employs his nourishment alike to his own use and to that of the enemy which is part of himself. He soon fails to resist the pressure of his environment. In practical life, a man who is doing what his conscience tells him to be wrong will do it very clumsily. At first!)

9. A man who is doing his True Will has the inertia of the Universe to assist him.

(*Illustration*: The first principle of success in evolution is that the individual should be true to his own nature, and at the same time adapt himself to his environment.)

10. Nature is a continuous phenomenon, though we do not know in all cases how things are connected.

(*Illustration*: Human consciousness depends on the properties of protoplasm, the existence of which depends on innumerable physical conditions peculiar to this planet; and this planet is determined by the mechanical balance of the whole universe of matter. We may then say that our consciousness is causally connected with the remotest galaxies; yet we do not know even how it arises from—or with—the molecular changes in the brain.)

11. Science enables us to take advantage of the continuity of Nature by the empirical application of certain principles whose interplay involves different orders of idea, connected with each other in a way beyond our present comprehension.

(*Illustration*: We are able to light cities by rule-of-thumb methods. We do not know what consciousness is, or how it is connected with muscular action; what electricity is or how it is connected with the machines that generate it; and our methods depend on calculations involving mathematical ideas which have no correspondence in the Universe as we know it.‡)

12. Man is ignorant of the nature of his own being and powers. Even his idea of his limitations is based on experience of the past, and every step in his progress extends his empire. There is, therefore, no reason to assign theoretical limits§ to what he may be, or to what he may do.

(*Illustration*: Two generations ago it was supposed theoretically impossible that man should ever know the chemical composition of the fixed stars. It is known that our senses are adapted to receive only an infinitesimal fraction of the possible rates of vibration. Modern instruments have enabled us to detect some of these suprasensibles by indirect methods, and even to use their peculiar qualities in the service of man, as in the case of the rays of Hertz and Röntgen. As Tyndall said, man might at any moment learn to perceive and utilize vibrations of all conceivable and inconceivable kinds. The question of Magick is a question of discovering and employing hitherto unknown forces in nature. We know that they

exist, and we cannot doubt the possibility of mental or physical instruments capable of bringing us in relation with them.)

13. Every man is more or less aware that his individuality comprises several orders of existence, even when he maintains that his subtler principles are merely symptomatic of the changes in his gross vehicle. A similar order may be assumed to extend throughout nature.

(*Illustration*: One does not confuse the pain of toothache with the decay which causes it. Inanimate objects are sensitive to certain physical forces, such as electrical and thermal conductivity; but neither in us nor in them—so far as we know—is there any direct conscious perception of these forces. Imperceptible influences are therefore associated with all material phenomena; and there is no reason why we should not work upon matter through those subtle energies as we do through their material bases. In fact, we use magnetic force to move iron, and solar radiation to reproduce images.)

14. Man is capable of being, and using, anything which he perceives; for everything that he perceives is in a certain sense a part of his being. He may thus subjugate the whole Universe of which he is conscious to his individual Will.

(*Illustration*: Man has used the idea of God to dictate his personal conduct, to obtain power over his fellows, to excuse his crimes, and for innumerable other purposes, including that of realizing himself as God. He has used the irrational and unreal conceptions of mathematics to help him in the construction of mechanical devices. He has used his moral force to influence the actions even of wild animals. He has employed poetic genius for political purposes.)

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* In one sense Magick may be said to be the name given to Science by the vulgar.

† By "intentional" I mean "willed." But even unintentional acts so seeming are not truly so. Thus, breathing is an act of the Will-to-live.

‡ For instance, "irrational," "unreal," and "infinite" expressions.

§ i.e. except—possibly—in the case of logically absurd questions, such as the schoolmen discussed in connection with "God."

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15. Every force in the Universe is capable of being transformed into any other kind of force by using suitable means. There is thus an inexhaustible supply of any particular kind of force that we may need.

(*Illustration*: Heat may be transformed into light and power by using it to drive dynamos. The vibrations of the air may be used to kill men by so ordering them in speech as to inflame war-like passions. The hallucinations connected with the mysterious energies of sex result in the perpetuation of the species.)

16. The application of any given force affects all the orders of being which exist in the object to which it is applied, whichever of those orders is directly affected.

(*Illustration*: If I strike a man with a dagger, his consciousness, not his body only, is affected by my act; although the dagger, as such, has no direct relation therewith. Similarly, the power of my thought may so work on the mind of another person as to produce far- reaching physical changes in him, or in others through him.)

17. A man may learn to use any force so as to serve any purpose, by taking advantage of the above theorems.

(*Illustration*: A man may use a razor to make himself vigilant over his speech, by using it to cut himself whenever he unguardedly utters a chosen word. He may serve the same purpose by resolving that every incident of his life shall remind him of a particular thing, Making every impression the starting point of a connected series of thoughts ending in that thing. He might also devote his whole energies to some particular object, by resolving to do nothing at variance therewith, and to make every act turn to the advantage of that object.)

18. He may attract to himself any force of the Universe by making himself a fit receptacle for it, establishing a connection with it, and arranging conditions so that its nature compels it to flow toward him.

(*Illustration*: If I want pure water to drink, I dig a well in a place where there is underground water; I prevent it from leaking away; and I arrange to take advantage of water's accordance with the laws of Hydrostatics to fill it.)

19. Man's sense of himself as separate from, and opposed to, the Universe is a bar to his conducting its currents. It insulates him.

(*Illustration*: A popular leader is most successful when he forgets himself, and remembers only “The Cause.” Self-seeking engenders jealousies and schism.

When the organs of the body assert their presence otherwise than by silent satisfaction, it is a sign that they are diseased. The single exception is the organ of reproduction. Yet even in this case self-assertion bears witness to its dissatisfaction with itself, since in cannot fulfill its function until completed by its counterpart in another organism.)

20. Man can only attract and employ the forces for which he is really fitted.

(*Illustration*: You cannot make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. A true man of science learns from every phenomenon. But Nature is dumb to the hypocrite; for in her there is nothing false.*****)

21. There is no limit to the extent of the relations of any man with the Universe in essence; for as soon as man makes himself one with any idea, the means of measurement cease to exist. But his power to utilize that force is limited by his mental power and capacity, and by the circumstances of his human environment.

(*Illustration*: When a man falls in love, the whole world becomes, to him, nothing but love boundless and immanent; but his mystical state is not contagious; his fellow-men are either amused or annoyed. He can only extend to others the effect which his love has had upon himself by means of his mental and physical qualities. Thus, Catullus, Dante, and Swinburne made their love a mighty mover of mankind by virtue of their power to put their thoughts on the subject in musical and eloquent language. Again, Cleopatra and other people in authority moulded the fortunes of many other people by allowing love to influence their political actions. The Magician, however well he succeeds in making contact with the secret sources of energy in nature, can only use them to the extent permitted by his intellectual and moral qualities. Mohammed's intercourse with Gabriel was only effective because of his statesmanship, soldiership, and the sublimity of his command of Arabic. Hertz's discovery of the rays which we now use for wireless telegraphy was sterile until reflected through the minds and wills of the people who could take his truth, and transmit it to the world of action by means of mechanical and economic instruments.)

22. Every individual is essentially sufficient to himself. But he is unsatisfactory to himself until he has established himself in his right relation with the Universe.

(*Illustration*: A microscope, however perfect, is useless in the hands of savages. A poet, however sublime, must impose himself upon his generation if he is to enjoy (and even to understand) himself, as theoretically should be the case.)

23. Magick is the Science of understanding oneself and one's conditions. It is the Art of applying that understanding in action.

(*Illustration*: A golf club is intended to move a special ball in a special way in special circumstances. A Niblick should rarely be used on the tee, or a Brassie under the bank of a bunker. But, also, the use of any club demands skill and experience.)

24. Every man has an indefeasible right to be what he is.

(*Illustration*: To insist that anyone else shall comply with one's own standards is to outrage, not only him, but oneself, since both parties are equally born of necessity.)

25. Every man must do Magick each time that he acts or even thinks, since a thought is an internal act whose influence ultimately affects action, though it may not do so at the time.

(*Illustration*: The least gesture causes a change in a man's own body and in the air around him: it disturbs the balance of the entire universe and its effects continue eternally throughout all space. Every thought, however swiftly suppressed, has its effect on the mind. It stands as one of the causes of every subsequent thought, and tends to influence every subsequent action. A golfer may lose a few yards on his drive, a few more with his second and third, he may lie on the green six bare inches too far from the hole; but the net result of these trifling mishaps is the difference of a whole stroke, and so probably between having and losing the hole.)

26. Every man has a right, the right of self-preservation, to ful-fill himself to the utmost.†

(*Illustration*: A function imperfectly performed injures, not only itself, but everything associated with it. If the heart is afraid to beat for fear of disturbing the liver, the liver is starved for blood, and avenges itself on the heart by upsetting digestion, which disorders respiration, on which cardiac welfare depends.)

27. Every man should make Magick the keynote of his life. He should learn its laws and live by them.

(*Illustration*: The Banker should discover the real meaning of his existence, the real motive which led him to choose that profession. He should understand banking as a necessary factor in the economic existence of mankind, instead of as merely a business whose objects are independent of the general welfare. He should learn to distinguish false values from real, and to act not on accidental fluctuations but on considerations of essential importance. Such a banker will prove himself superior to others; because he will not be an individual limited by transitory things, but a force of Nature, as impersonal, impartial and eternal as gravitation, as patient and irresistible as the tides. His system will not be subject to panic, any more than the law of Inverse Squares is disturbed by Elections. He will not be anxious about his affairs because they will not be his; and for that reason he will be able to direct them with the calm, clear-headed confidence of an onlooker, with intelligence unclouded by self-interest and power unimpaired by passion.)

28. Every man has a right to fulfill his own will without being afraid that it may interfere with that of others; for if he is in his proper path, it is the fault of others if they interfere with him.

(*Illustration*: If a man like Napoleon were actually appointed by destiny to control Europe, he should not be blamed for exercising his rights. To oppose him would be an error. Anyone so doing would have made a mistake as to his own destiny, except in so far as it might be necessary for him to learn the lessons of defeat. The sun moves in space without interference. The order of Nature provides a orbit for each star. A clash proves that one or the other has strayed from its course. But as to each man that keeps his true course, the more firmly he acts, the less likely are others to get in his way. His example will help them to find their own paths and pursue them. Every man that becomes a Magician helps others to do likewise. The more firmly and surely men move, and the more such action is accepted as the standard of morality, the less will conflict and confusion hamper humanity.)

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* It is no objection that the hypocrite is himself part of Nature. He is an "endothermic" product, divided against himself, with a tendency to break up. He will see his own qualities everywhere, and thus obtain a radical misconception of phenomena. Most religions of the past have failed by expecting Nature to conform with their ideals of proper conduct.

† Men of "criminal nature" are simply at issue with their true Wills. The murderer has the Will-to-live; and his will to murder is a false will at variance with his true Will, since he risks death at the hands of Society by obeying his criminal impulse.

Well, here endeth the First Lesson.

That seems to me to cover the ground fairly well; at least, that is what I have to say when serious analysis is on the agenda.

But there is a restricted and conventional sense in which the word may be used without straying too far from the above philosophical position. One might say:—

"Magick is the study and use of those forms of energy which are (a) subtler than the ordinary physical-mechanical types, (b) accessible only to those who are (in one sense or another) 'Initiates'." I fear that this may sound rather *obscurum per obscurius*; but this is one of these cases— we are likely to encounter many such in the course of our researches—in which we understand, quite well enough for all practical purposes, what we mean, but which elude us more and more successfully the more accurately we struggle to define their import.

We might fare even worse if we tried to clear things up by making lists of events in history, tradition, or experience and classifying this as being, and that as not being, true Magick. The borderland cases would confuse and mislead us.

But—since I have mentioned history—I think it might help, if I went straight on to the latter part of your question, and gave you a brief sketch of Magick past, present and future as it is seen from the inside.

What are the principles of the "Masters"? What are They trying to do? What have They done in the past? What means do They employ?

As it happens, I have by me a sketch written by M. Gerard Aumont of Tunis**2** some twenty years ago, which covers this subject with reasonable adequacy.

I have been at the pains of translating it from his French, I hope not too much reminiscent of the old *traduttore, traditore*. I will revise it, divide it (like Gaul) into Three Parts and send it along.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

1: i.e., Magick in Theory and Practice. All Crowley's footnotes are from the original – T.S.

2: Gerard Aumont was a journalist who translated The Book of the Law into French. However it is generally believed that the actual author of the essay mentioned, The Three Schools of Magick, which occupies chapters 6-8 of Magick Without Tears (it had previously been published in German translation by Thelema Verlag) was Crowley himself – T.S.

Chapter 2

The Necessity of Magick for All

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Right glad am I to hear that you have been so thoroughly satisfied with my explanation of what Magick is, and on what its theories rest. It is good, too, hearing how much you were interested in the glimpse that you have had of some of its work in the world; more, that you grasped the fact that this apparently recondite and irrelevant information has an immediate bearing on your personal life of today. Still, I was not surprised that you should add: "But why should *I* make a special study of, and devote my time and energy to acquiring proficiency in, the Science and Art of Magick?

Ah, well then, perhaps you have not understood my remarks at one of our earliest interviews as perfectly as you suppose! For the crucial point of my exposition was that Magick is not a matter extraneous to the main current of your life, as music, gardening, or collection jade might be. No, every act of your life is a magical act; whenever from ignorance, carelessness, clumsiness or what not, you come short of perfect artistic success, you inevitably register failure, discomfort, frustration. Luckily for all of us, most of the acts essential to continued life are involuntary; the "unconscious" has become so used to doing its "True Will" that there is no need of interference; when such need arises, we call it disease, and seek to restore the machine to free spontaneous fulfillment of its function.

But this is only part of the story. As things are, we have all adventured into an Universe of immeasurable, of incalculable, possibilities, of situations never contemplated by the trend of Evolution. Man is a marine monster; when he decided that it would be better for him somehow to live on land, he had to grow lungs instead of gills. When we want to travel over soft snow, we have to invent ski; when we wish to exchange thoughts, we must arrange a conventional code of

sounds, of knots in string, of carved or written characters—in a word—embark upon the boundless ocean of hieroglyphics or symbols of one sort or another. (Presently I shall have to explain the supreme importance of such systems; in fact, the Universe itself is not, and cannot be, anything but an arrangement of symbolic characters!)

Here we are, then, caught in a net of circumstances; if we are to do anything at all beyond automatic vegetative living, we must consciously apply ourselves to Magick, "the Science and Art" (let me remind you!) "of causing change to occur in conformity with the Will." Observe that the least slackness or error means that things happen which do not thus conform; when this is so despite our efforts, we are (temporarily) baffled; when it is our own ignorance of what we ought to will, or lack of skill in adapting our means to the right end, then we set up a conflict in our own Nature: our act is suicidal. Such interior struggle is at the base of nearly all neuroses, as Freud recently "discovered"—as if this had not been taught, and taught without his massed errors, by the great teachers of the past! The Taoist doctrine, in particular, is most precise and most emphatic on this point; indeed, it may seem to some of us to overshoot the mark; for nothing is permissible in that scheme but frictionless adjustment and adaptation to circumstance. "Benevolence and righteousness" are actually deprecated! That any such ideas should ever have existed (says Lao-tse) is merely evidence of the universal disorder.

Taoist sectaries appear to assume that Perfection consists in the absence of any disturbance of the Stream of Nescience; and this is very much like the Buddhist idea of Nibbana.

We who accept the Law of Thelema, even should we concur in this doctrine theoretically, cannot admit that in practice the plan would work out; our aim is that our Nothing, ideally perfect as it is in itself, should enjoy itself through realizing itself in the fulfillment of all possibilities. All such phenomena or "point-events" are equally "illusion"; Nothing is always Nothing; but the projection of Nothing on this screen of the phenomenal does not only explain, but constitutes, the Universe. It is the only system which reconciles all the contradictions inherent in Thought, and in Experience; for in it "Reality" *is* "Illusion", "Free-will" *is* "Destiny", the "Self" *is* the "Not-Self"; and so for every puzzle of Philosophy.

Not too bad an analogy is an endless piece of string. Like a driving band, you cannot tie a knot in it; all the complexities you can contrive are "Tom Fool" knots, and unravel at the proper touch. Always either Naught or Two! But every new re-

arrangement throws further light on the possible tangles, that is, on the Nature of the String itself. It is always "Nothing" when you pull it out; but becomes "Everything" as you play about with it,* since there is no limit to the combinations that you can form from it, save only in your imagination (where the whole thing belongs!) and that grows mightily with Experience. It is accordingly well worth while to fulfill oneself in every conceivable manner.

It is then (you will say) impossible to "do wrong", since all phenomena are equally "Illusion" and the answer is always "Nothing." In theory one can hardly deny this proposition; but in practice—how shall I put it? "The state of Illusion which for convenience I call my present consciousness is such that the course of action A is more natural to me than the course of action B?"

Or: A is a shorter cut to Nothing; A is less likely to create internal conflict.

Will that serve?

Offer a dog a juicy bone, and a bundle of hay; he will *naturally* take the bone, whereas a horse would choose the hay. So, while you happen to imagine yourself to be a Fair Lady seeking the Hidden Wisdom, you come to me; if you thought you were a Nigger Minstrel, you would play the banjo, and sing songs calculated to attract current coin of the Realm from a discerning Public! The two actions are ultimately identical—see AL I, 22—and your perception of that fact would make you an Initiate of very high standing; but in the work-a-day world, you are "really" the Fair Lady, and leave the minstrel to grow infirm and old and hire an orphan boy to carry his banjo!

Now then, what bothers me it this: Have I or have I not explained this matter of "Magick"—"Why should I (who have only just heard of it, at least as a serious subject of study) acquire a knowledge of its principles, and of the powers conferred by its mastery?" Must I bribe you with promises of health, wealth, power over others, knowledge, thaumaturgical skill, success in every worldly ambition—as I could quite honestly do? I hope there is no such need—and yet, shall I confess it?—it was only because all the good things of life were suddenly seen of me to be worthless, that I took the first steps towards the attainment of that Wisdom which, while enjoying to the full the "Feast of Life," guarantees me against surfeit, poison or interruption by the knowledge that it is all a Dream, and gives me the Power to turn that dream at will into any form that happens to appeal to my Inclination.

Let me sum up, very succinctly; as usual, my enthusiasm has lured me into embroidering my sage discourse with Poets' Imagery!

Why should you study and practice Magick? Because you can't help doing it, and you had better do it well than badly. You are on the links, whether you like it or not; why go on topping your drive, and slicing your brassie, and fluffing your niblick, and pulling your iron, and socketing your mashie and not being up with your putt—that's 6, and you are not allowed to pick up. It's a far cry to the Nineteenth, and the sky threatens storm before the imminent night.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

* N ± N = Two or Naught; one is the Magical, the other the mystical, process. You will hear a lot about this one day!

Chapter 3

Hieroglyphics: Life and Language Necessarily Symbolic

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Very natural, the irritation in your last! You write:—

"But why? Why all this elaborate symbolism? Why not say straight out what you mean? Surely the subject is difficult enough in any case—must you put on a mask to make it clear? I know you well enough by now to be sure that you will not fob me off with any Holy-Willie nonsense about the ineffable, about human language being inadequate to reveal such Mysteries, about the necessity of constructing a new language to explain a new system of thought; of course I know that this had to be done in the case of chemistry, of higher mathematics, indeed of almost all technical subjects; but I feel that you have some other, deeper explanation in reserve.

"After all, most of what I am seeking to learn from you has been familiar to many of the great minds of humanity for many centuries. Indeed, the Qabalah *is* a special language, and that is old enough; there is not much new material to fit into that structure. But why did they, in the first place, resort to this symbolic jargon?"

You put it very well; and when I think it over, I feel far from sure that the explanation which I am about to inflict upon you will satisfy you, or even whether it will hold water! In the last resort, I shall have to maintain that we are justified by experience, by the empirical success in communicating thought which has attended, and continues to attend, our endeavors.

But to give a complete answer, I shall have to go back to the beginning, and restate the original problem; and I beg that you will not suppose that I am evading the question, or adopting the Irish method of answer- ing it by another, though I know it may sound as if I were.

Let me set out by restating our original problem; what we want is Truth; we want an even closer approach to Reality; and we want to discover and discuss the proper means of achieving this object.

Very good; let us start by the simplest of all possible enquiries—and the most difficult—"What is anything?" "What do we know?" and other questions that spring naturally from these.

I see a tree.
I hear it—rustling or creaking in the wind.
I touch it—hard.
I smell it—acrid.
I taste it—bitter.

Now all the information given by these five senses has to be put together, although no two agree in any sort of way. The logic by which we build up our complex idea of a tree has more holes than a sponge.

But this is to jump far ahead: we must first analyze the single, simple impression. "I see a tree." This phenomenon is what is called a "point-event." It is the coming together of the two, the seer and the seen. It is single and simple; yet we cannot conceive of either of them as anything but complex. And the Point-Event tells us nothing whatever about either; both, as Herbert Spencer and God knows how many others have shown, unknowable; it stands by itself, alone and aloof. It has happened; it is undeniably Reality. Yet we cannot confirm it; for it can never happen again precisely the same. What is even more bewildering is that since it takes time for the eye to convey an impression to the consciousness (it may alter in 1,000 ways in the process!) all that really exists is a memory of the Point-Event. not the Point-Event itself. What then *is* this Reality of which we are so sure? Obviously, it has not got a name, since it never happened before, or can happen again! To discuss it at all we must *invent* a name, and this name (like all names) cannot possibly be anything more than a symbol.

Even so, as so often pointed out, all we do is to "record the behaviour of our instruments." Nor are we much better off when we've done it; for our symbol, referring as it does to a phenomenon unique in itself, and not to be apprehended by another, can mean nothing to one's neighbors. What happens, of course, is that similar, though not identical, Point-Events happen to many of us, and so we are able to construct a symbolic language. My memory of the mysterious Reality

resembles yours sufficiently to induce us to agree that both belong to the same class.

But let me furthermore ask you to reflect on the formation of language itself. Except in the case of onomatopoeic words and a few others, there is no logical connection between a thing and the sound of our name for it. “Bow-wow” is a more rational name than “dog”, which is a mere convention agreed on by the English, while other nations prefer *chien*, *hund*, *cane*, *kalb*, *kutta* and so on. All symbols, you see, my dear child, and it's no good your kicking!

But it doesn't stop there. When we try to convey thought by writing, we are bound to sit down solidly, and construct a holy Qabalah out of nothing. Why would a curve open to the right, sound like the ocean, open at the top, like you? And all these arbitrary symbolic letters are combined by just as symbolic and arbitrary devices to take on conventional meanings, these words again combined into phrases by no less high-handed a procedure.

And then folk wonder how it is that there should be error and misunderstanding in the transmission of thought from one person to another! Rather regard it as a miraculous intervention of Providence when even one of even the simplest ideas “gets across.” Now then, this being so, it is evidently good sense to construct one's own alphabet, with one's own very precise definitions, in order to handle an abstruse and technical subject like Magick. The “ordinary” words such as God, self, soul, spirit and the rest have been used so many thousand times in so many thousand ways, usually by writers who knew not, or cared not for the necessity of definition that to use them to-day in any scientific essay is almost ludicrous.

That is all, just now, sister; no more of your cavilling, please; sit down quietly with your *777*, and get it by heart!

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

Chapter 4

The Qabalah: The Best Training for Memory

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Now you must learn Qabalah. Learn this Alphabet of Magick. You must take it on trust, as a child does his own alphabet. No one has ever found out why the order of the letters is what it is. Probably there isn't any answer.

If you only knew what I am grappling with in the *Yi King*! the order of the sixty-four hexagrams. I am convinced that it is extremely significant, that it implies a sublime system of philosophy. I've got far enough to be absolutely sure that there is a necessary rhythm; and it's killing me by millimetres, finding out why each pair succeeds the last. Forgive these tears!

But our Magical Alphabet is primarily not letters, but figures, not sounds but mathematical ideas. Sir Humphrey Davy, coming out of his famous illumination (with some help from Nitrous Oxide he got in) exclaimed: The Universe is composed solely of ideas. We, analyzing this a little, say: The Universe is a mathematical expression.

Sir James Jeans might have said this, only his banker advised him to cash in on God. The simplest form of this expression is 0 = 2, elsewhere expounded at great length. This 2 might itself be expressed in an indefinitely great number of ways. Every prime number, including some not in the series of “natural numbers”, is an individual. The other numbers with perhaps a few exceptions (e.g. 418) are composed of their primes.

Each of these ideas may be explained, investigated, understood, by means very various. Firstly, the Hebrew, Greek and Arabic numbers are also letters. Then, each of these letters is further described by one of the (arbitrarily composed) “elements

of Nature; the Four (or Five) Elements, the Seven (or Ten) Planets, and the Twelve Signs of the Zodiac.

All these are arranged in a geometrical design composed of ten “Sephiroth” (numbers) and twenty-two “paths” joining them; this is called the Tree of Life.

Every idea soever can be, and should be, attributed to one or more of these primary symbols; thus green, in different shades, is a quality or function of Venus, the Earth, the Sea, Libra, and others. So also abstract ideas; dishonesty means “an afflicted Mercury,” generosity a good, though not always strong, Jupiter; and so on.

The Tree of Life has got to be learnt by heart; you must know it backwards, forwards, sideways, and upside down; it must become the automatic background of all your thinking. You must keep on hanging everything that comes your way upon its proper bough.

At first, of course, all this is dreadfully confusing; but persist, and a time will come when all the odd bits fit into the jig-saw, and you behold—with what adoring wonder!—the marvellous beauty and symmetry of the Qabalistic system.

And then—what a weapon you will have forged!

What power to analyze, to order, to manipulate your thinking!

And please remember when people compliment you on your memory or the clarity of your thought, to give credit to the Qabalah!

That's fine, I seem to hear you purr; that looks a lovely machine. The Design is just elegant; that scarf-pin of yours is perfectly sweet.

There's only one point: how to make the damn thing work?

Ah yes, like the one in the Apocalypse, the sting is in your tail.

Honest, you needn't worry; it works on ball-bearings, and there's always those “Thirteen Fountains of Magnificent Oil flowing down the Beard of Macroprosopus” in case it creaks a little at first. But seriously, all the mathematics you need is simple Addition and Multiplication.

“Yeah!” you rudely reply. “That's what *you* think; but you haven't got very far in the Qabalah!”

Too true, sister.

The Book of the Law itself insists upon the fact that it contains a Qabalah which was beyond me at the time of its dictation, is beyond me now, and always will be beyond me in this incarnation. Let me direct your spiritual attention to AL I, 54; I, 56; II, 54-55; II, 76; III, 47.

Now there was enough comprehensible at the time to assure me that the Author of the Book knew at least as much Qabalah as I did: I discovered subsequently more than enough to make it certain without error that he knew a very great deal more, and that of an altogether higher order, than I knew; finally, such glimmerings of light as time and desperate study have thrown on many other obscure passages, to leave no doubt whatever in my mind that he is indeed the supreme Qabalist of all time …

"I asked you how to work it."

Don't be so peevish, querulous, and impatient; your zeal is laudable, but it's wasting your own time to hurry me.

Well, when you've got this Alphabet of Numbers (in its proper shape) absolutely by heart, with as many sets of attributions as you can commit to memory without getting confused, you may try a few easy exercises, beginning with the past.

("How many sets of attributions?"—Well, certainly, the Hebrew and Greek Alphabets with the names and numbers of each letter, and its mean- ing: a couple of lists of God-names, with a clear idea of the character, qualities, functions, and importance of each; the "King-scale" of colour, all the Tarot attributions, of course; then animals, plants, drugs, per- fumes, a list or two of archangels, angels, intelligences and spirits—that ought to be enough for a start.)

Now you are armed! Ask yourself: why is the influence of Tiphareth transmitted to Yesod by the Path of Samekh, a fence, 60, Sagittarius, the Archer, Art, blue—and so on; but to Hod by the Path of Ayin, an eye, 70, Capricornus, the Goat, the Devil, Indigo, K.T.L.

Thirteen is the number of Achad {Hebrew option}, Unity, and Ahebah {Hebrew option}, Love; then what word should arise when you expand it by the Creative Dyad, and get 26; what when you multiply it by 4, and get 52? Then, suppose the Pentagram gets busy, 13 x 5 = 65, what then?

Now don't you dare to come round crawling to me for the answers; work it out yourself what sort of words they *ought* to be, and then check your result by looking up those numbers in the *Sepher Sephiroth*: *Equinox* Vol. I, No. 8, Supplement.

When you are a real adept at all these well-known calculations "prepare to enter the Immeasurable Region" and dig out the Unknown.

You must construct your own Qabalah!

Nobody can do it for you. What is your own true Number? You must find it and prove it to be correct. In the course of a few years, you should have built yourself a Palace of Ineffable Glory, a Garden of Indescribable Delight. Nor Time nor Fate can tame those tranquil towers, those Minarets of Music, or fade one blossom in those avenues of Perfume!

Humph! Nasty of me: but it has just stuck me that it might be just as well if you made a *Sepher Sephiroth* of your own! What a positively beastly thing to suggest! However, I do suggest it.

After all, it's simple enough. Every word you come across, add it up, stick it down against that number in a book kept for the purpose. That may seem tedious and silly; why should you do all over again the work that I have already done for you? Reason: simple. Doing it will teach you Qabalah as nothing else could. Besides, you won't be all cluttered up with words that mean nothing to you; and if it should happen that you want a word to explain some particular number, you can look it up in my *Sepher Sephiroth*.

By this method, too, you may strike a rich vein of words of your own that I have altogether missed.

No doubt, a Really Great Teacher would have said: "Beware! Use my Dictionary, and mine alone! All others are spurious!" But then I'm not a R.G.T. of that kind.

For a start, of course, you should put down the words that are bound to come in your way in any case: numbers like 11, 13, 31, 37, and their multiples; the names of God and the principal angels; the planetary and geomantic names; and your own private and particular name with its branches. After that, let your work on the Astral Plane guide you. When investigating the name and other words communicated to you by such beings as you meet there, or invoke, many more will come up in their proper connections. Very soon you will have quite a nice

little *Sepher Sephiroth* of your very own. Remember to aim, above all things, at coherence.

It is excellent practice, but the way, to do some mental arithmetic on your walks; acquire the habit of adding up any names that you have come across in your morning's reading. Nietzsche has well observed that the best thoughts come by walking; and it has happened to me, more than once or twice, that really important correspondences have come, as by a flashlight, when I was padding the old hoof.

You will have noticed that in this curt exposition I have confined myself to Gematria, the direct relation of number and word, omitting any reference to Notariqon, the accursed art of making words out of initials, like (in profane life) Wren and Gestapo and their horrid brood, or to Temurah, the art of altering the position of the letters in a word,**1** a sort of cipher; for these are almost always frivolous. To base any serious calculations on them would be absurd.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

P.S. You should study the Equinox Vol. I, No. 5, ”The Temple of Solomon the King“ for a more elaborate exposition of the Qabalah.

1: Temurah is more normally understood as a form of letter substitution cipher rather than the formation of anagrams as Crowley seems to suggest here; historically it appears that its applications have been as much in the realm of mundane cryptography as in Qabalistic exegesis. For example, the Viginaire cipher, held unbreakable for a few centuries, used a Latin version of the Qabalistic (so called) “Right Table of Commutations” – T.S.

Chapter 5

The Universe: The 0 = 2 Equation

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Yes, I admit everything! It is *all* my fault. Looking over my past writings, I do see that my only one-pointed attempt to set forth a sound ontology was my early fumbling letter brochure Berashith. Since then, I seem to have kept assuming that everybody knew all about it; referring to it, quoting it, but never sitting down seriously to demonstrate the thesis, or even to state it in set terms. Chapter 0 of *Magick in Theory and Practice* skates gently over it; the "Naples Arrangement" in *The Book of Thoth* dodges it with really diabolical ingenuity. I ask myself why. It is exceedingly strange, because every time I think of the Equation, I am thrilled with a keen glow of satisfaction that this sempiternal Riddle of the Sphinx should have been answered at last.

So then let me now give myself the delight, and you the comfort, of stating the problem from its beginning, and proving the soundness of the solution—of showing that the contradiction of this Equation is *unthinkable*. — — Are you ready? Forward! Paddle!

A. We are aware.

B. We cannot doubt the existence (whether "real" or "illusory" makes no difference) of something, because doubt itself is a form of awareness.

C. We lump together all that of which we are aware under the convenient name of "Existence", or "The Universe". *Cosmos* is not so good for this purpose; that word implies "order", which in the present stage of our argument, is a mere assumption.

D. We also tend to think of the Universe as containing things of which we are not aware; but this is altogether unjustifiable, although it is difficult to think at all

without making some such assumption. For instance, one may come upon a new branch of knowledge—say, histology or Hammurabi or the language of the Iroquois or the poems of the Hermaphrodite of Panormita. It seems to be there all ready waiting for us; we simply cannot believe that we are making it all up as we go along. For all that, it is sheer sophistry; we may merely be unfolding the contents of our own minds. Then again, does a thing cease to exist if we forget it? The answer is that one cannot be sure.

Personally, I feel convinced of the existence of an Universe outside my own immediate awareness; but it is true, even so, that it does not exist *for me* unless and until it takes its place as part of my consciousness.

E. All this paragraph D is in the nature of a digression, for what you may think of it does not at all touch the argument of this letter. But it had to be put in, just to prevent your mind from raising irrelevant objections. Let me continue, then, from C.

F. Something is.* This something appears incalculably vast and complex. How did it come to be?

This, briefly, is the "Riddle of the Universe," which has been always the first preoccupation of all serious philosophers since men began to think at all.

G. The orthodox idiot answer, usually wrapped up in obscure terms in the hope of concealing from the enquirer the fact that it is not an answer at all, but an evasion, is: God created it.

Then, obviously, who created God? Sometimes we have a Demiurge, a creative God behind whom is an eternal formless Greatness—anything to confuse the issue!

Sometimes the Universe is supported by an elephant; he, in turn, stands on a tortoise . . . by that time it is hoped that the enquirer is too tired and muddled to ask what holds up the tortoise.

Sometimes, a great Father and Mother crystallize out of some huge cloudy confusion of "Elements"and so on. But nobody answers the question; at least, none of these God-inventing mules, with their incurably commonplace minds.

H. Serious philosophy has always begun by discarding all these puerilities. It has of necessity been divided into these schools: the Nihilist, the Monist, and the Dualist.

I. The last of these is, on the surface, the most plausible; for almost the first thing that we notice on inspecting the Universe is what the Hindu schools call "the Pairs of Opposites."

This too, is very convenient, because it lends itself so readily to orthodox theology; so we have Ormuzd and Ahriman, the Devas and the Asuras, Osiris and Set, *et cetera* and *da capo*, personifications of "Good" and "Evil." The foes may be fairly matched; but more often the tale tells of a revolt in heaven. In this case, "Evil" is temporary; soon, especially with the financial help of the devout, the "devil" will be "cast into the Bottomless Pit" and "the Saints will reign with Christ in glory for ever and ever, Amen!" Often a "redeemer," a "dying God," is needed to secure victory to Omnipotence; and this is usually what little vulgar boys might call a "touching story!"

J. The Monist (or Advaitist) school, is at once subtler and more refined; it seems to approach the *ultimate* reality (as opposed to the superficial examination of the Dualists) more closely.

It seems to me that this doctrine is based upon a sorites of doubtful validity. To tell you the hideously shameful truth, I hate this doctrine so rabidly that I can hardly trust myself to present it fairly! But I will try. Meanwhile, you can study it in the *Upanishads*, in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, in Ernst Haeckel's *The Riddle of the Universe*, and dozens of other classics. The dogma appears to excite its dupes to dithyrambs. I have to admit the "poetry" of the idea; but there is something in me which vehemently rejects it with excruciating and vindictive violence. Possibly, this is because part of our own system runs parallel with the first equations of theirs.

K. The Monists perceive quite clearly and correctly that it is absurd to answer the question "How came these Many things (of which we are aware) to be?" by saying that they came from Many; and "Many" in this connection includes Two. The Universe must therefore be a single phenomenon: make it eternal and all the rest of it—*i.e.* remove all *limit* of any kind—and the Universe explains itself. How then can Opposites exist, as we observe them to do? Is it not the very essence of our original Sorites that the Many must be reducible to the One? They see how awkward this is; so the "devil" of the Dualist is emulsified and evaporated into "illusion;" what they call "Maya" or some equivalent term.

"Reality" for them consists solely of Brahman, the supreme Being "without quantity or quality." They are compelled to deny him all attributes, even that of

Existence; for to do so would instantly *limit* them, and so hurl them headlong back in to Dualism. All that of which we are aware must obviously possess limits, or it could have no intelligible meaning for us; if we want "pork," we must specify its qualities and quantities; at the very least, we must be able to distinguish it from "that-which-is-not-pork."

But—one moment, please!

L. There is in Advaitism a most fascinating danger; that is that, up to a certain point, "Religious Experience" tends to support this theory.

A word on this. Vulgar minds, such as are happy with a personal God, Vishnu, Jesus, Melcarth, Mithras, or another, often excite themselves—call it "Energized Enthusiasm" if you want to be sarcastic!—to the point of experiencing actual Visions of the objects of their devotion. But these people have not so much as asked themselves the original question of "How come?" which is our present subject. Sweep them into the discard!

M. Beyond Vishvarupadarshana, the vision of the Form of Vishnu, beyond that yet loftier vision which corresponds in Hindu classification to our "Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel", is that called Atmadarshana, the vision (*or apprehension*, a much better word) of the Universe as a *single*_phenomenon, outside all limitations, whether of time, space, causality, or what not.

Very good, then! Here we are with direct realization of the Advaitist theory of the Universe. Everything fits perfectly. Also, when I say "realization," I want you to understand that I mean what I say in a sense so intense and so absolute that it is impossible to convey my meaning to anyone who has not undergone that experience.†

How do we judge the "reality" of an ordinary impression upon consciousness? Chiefly by its intensity, by its persistence, by the fact that nobody can argue us out of our belief in it. As people said of Berkeley's 'Idealism'—"his arguments are irrefutable but they fail to carry conviction." No sceptical, no idealist queries can persuade us that a kick in the pants is not 'real' in any reasonable sense of the word. Moreover memory reassures us. However vivid a dream may be at the time, however it may persist throughout the years (though it is rare for any dream, unless frequently repeated, or linked to waking impressions by some happy conjunction of circumstances, to remain long in the mind with any clear-cut vision) it is hardly ever mistaken for an event of actual life. Good: then, as waking life is to dream,

so—yes, more so!—is Religious Experience as above described to that life common to all of us. It is not merely easy, it is natural, not merely natural, but inevitable, for anyone who has experienced "Samadhi" (this word conveniently groups the higher types of vision‡) to regard normal life as "illusion" by comparison with this state in which all problems are resolved, all doubts driven out, all limitations abolished.

But even beyond Atmadarshana comes the experience called Sivadarshana,§ in which this Atman (or Brahman), this limit-destroying Universe, is itself abolished and annihilated.

(And, with its occurrence, smash goes the whole of the Advaitist theory!)

It is a commonplace to say that no words can describe this final destruction. Such is the fact; and there is nothing one can do about it but put it down boldly as I have done above. It does not matter to our present purpose; all that we need to know is that the strongest prop of the Monist structure has broken off short.

Moreover, is it really adequate to postulate an origin of the Universe, as they inevitably do? Merely to deny that there ever was a beginning by saying that this "one" is eternal fails to satisfy me.

What is very much worse, I cannot see that to call Evil "illusion" helps us at all. When the Christian Scientist hears that his wife has been savagely mauled by her Peke, he has to smile, and say that "there is a claim of error." Not good enough.

* You must read The Soldier an The Hunchback: ! and ? in the *Equinox* I, 1.

† I have discussed this and the following points very fully in *Book 4* Part I, pp. 63-89.

‡ "Vision" is a *dreadfully* bad word for it; "trance" is better, but idiots always mix it up with hypnotism.

§ Possibly almost identical with the Buddhist Neroda-Samapatti.

N. It has taken a long while to clear the ground. That I did not expect; the above propositions are so familiar to me, they run so cleanly through my mind, that, until

I came to set them down in order, I had no idea what a long and difficult business it all was.

Still, it's a long lane, etc. We have seen that "Two" (or "Many") are unsatisfactory as origin, if only because they can always be reduced to "One"; and "One" itself is no better, because, among other things, it finds itself forced to deny the very premises on which it was founded.

Shall we be any better off if we assume that "Ex nihilo nihil fit" is a falsehood, that the origin of All Things is Nothing? Let us see!

O. Shall we first glance at the mathematical aspect of Nothing? (Including its identical equation in Logic.) This I worked out so long ago as 1902 e.g. in Berashith, which you will find reprinted in The Sword of Song, and in my *Collected Works*, Vol. I.

The argument may be summarized as follows.

When, in the ordinary way of business, we write 0, we should really write 0^n.**1** For 0 implies that the subject is not extended in any dimension under discussion. Thus a line may be two feet in length, but in breadth and depth the coefficient is Zero. We could describe it as 2f × 0b × 0d, or $n^{2f + 0b + 0d}$.**2**

What I proposed in considering "What do we mean by Nothing?" was to consider every possible quality of any object as a dimension.

For instance, one might describe this page as being *n*f + *n*'b + *n*"d + 0 **r**edness + 0 **a**miability + 0 **v**elocity + 0 **p**otential and so on, until you had noted and measured all the qualities it possesses, and excluded all that it does not. For convenience, we may write this expression as $X^{f+b+d+r+a+v+p}$—using the initials of the qualities which we call dimensions.

Just one further explanation in pure mathematics. To interpret X^1, X^{1+1} or X^2, and so on, we assume the reference to be to spatial dimensions. Thus suppose X^1 to be a line a foot long, X^2 will be a plane a foot square, and X^3 a cube measuring a foot in each dimension. But what about X^4? There are no more spatial dimensions. Modern mathematics has (unfortunately, I think) agreed to consider this fourth dimension as time. Well, and X{5}? To interpret this expression, we may begin to consider other qualities, such as electric capacity, colour, moral attributes, and so on.**3** But this remark, although necessary, leads us rather away from our main thesis instead of toward it.

P. What happens when we put a minus sign before the index (that small letter up on the right) instead of a plus? Quite simple. $x^2 = X^{1+1} = X^1 + X^1$. With a minus, we divide instead of multiplying. Thus, $X^{3-2} = X^3 \div X^2 = X^1$, just as if you had merely subtracted the 2 from the 3 in the index.

Now, at last, we come to the point of real importance to our thesis: how shall we interpret X^0? We may write it, obviously, as X^{1-1} or X^{n-n}. Good, divide. Then $X^1 \div X^1 = 1$. This is the same, clearly enough, whatever X may be.

Q. Ah, but what we started to do was discover the meaning of *Nothing*. It is not correct to write it simply as 0; for that 0 implies an index 0^1, or $0\{^2\}$, or 0^n. And if our Nothing is to be absolute Nothing, then there is not only no figure, but no index either. So we must write it as 0^0.

What is the value of this expression? We proceed as before; divide.

$0^0 = 0^{n-n} = 0^n \div 0^n = (0^n \div 1) \times (1 \div 0^n)$. Of course $0^n \div 1$ remains 0; but $1 \div 0\{n\} = \infty$.

That is, we have a clash of the "infinitely great" with the "infinitely small;" that knocks out the "infinity" (and Advaitism with it!) and leaves us with an indeterminate but finite number of utter variety. That is: 0^0 can only be interpreted as "The Universe that we know."

R. So much for one demonstration. Some people have found fault with the algebra; but the logical Equivalent is precisely parallel. Suppose I wish to describe my study in one respect: I can say "No dogs are in my study," or "Dogs are not in my study." I can make a little diagram: D is the world of dogs; S is my study. Here it is:

[FIGURE (DIAGRAM 1) REDACTED HERE]

The squares are quite separate. The whole world outside the square D is the world of no dogs: outside the square S, the world of no-study. But suppose now that I want to make the Zero absolute, like our 00, I must say "No dogs are not in my study."

Or, "There is no absence-of-dog in my study." That is the same as saying: "Some doge are in my study;" diagram again:

[FIGURE (DIAGRAM 2) REDACTED HERE]

In Diagram 1, “the world where no dogs are” included the whole of my study; in Diagram 2 that absence-of-dog is no longer there; so one or more of them must have got in somehow.

That's that; I know it may be a little difficult at first; fortunately there is a different way—the Chinese way—of stating the theorem in very much simpler terms.

S. The Chinese, like ourselves, begin with the idea of “Absolute Nothing.” They “make an effort, and call it the Tao;” but that is exactly what the Tao comes to mean, when we examine it. They see quite well, as we have done above, that merely to assert Nothing is not to explain the Universe; and they proceed to do so by means of a mathematical equation even simpler than ours, involving as it does no operations beyond simple addition and subtraction. They say “Nothing obviously means Nothing; it has no qualities nor quantities.” (The Advaitists said the same, and then stultified themselves completely by calling it One!) “But,” continue the sages of the Middle Kingdom, “it is always possible to reduce any expression to Nothing by taking any two equal and opposite terms.” (Thus n = (-n) = 0.) “We ought therefore to be able to get any expression that we want from Nothing; we merely have to be careful that the terms shall be precisely opposite and equal.” (0 = n + (-n). This then they did, and began to diagrammatize the Universe as the Î—a pair of opposites, the Yang or active male, and the Yin or passive Female, principles. They represented the Yang by an unbroken (———), the Yin by a broken (— —), line. (The first manifestation in Nature of these two is Th*f*i Yang, the Sun, and the Th*f*i Yin, the Moon.) This being a little large and loose, they doubled these lines, and obtained the four Hsiang. They then took them three at a time, and got the eight Kwa. These represent the development from the original &Oelig; {S.B. cap “I”} to the Natural Order of the Elements.

I shall call the male principle M, the Female F.

M.1.	*K*hien	"Heaven-Father"	F.1.	Khwån	"Earth-Mother"
M.2.	Lî	The Sun	F.2.	Khîn	The Moon
M.3.	*K*ån	Fire	F.3.	Tui	Water
M.4.	Sun	Air	F.4.	Kån	Earth

[TRIGRAM FIGURES ABOVE ↑ REDACTED]

Note how admirably they have preserved the idea of balance. M.1. and F.1. are perfection. M.2. and F.2. still keep balance in their lines. The four "elements" show imperfection; yet they are all balanced as against each other. Note, too, how apt are the ideograms. M.3. shows the flames flickering on the hearth, F.3., the wave on the solid bottom of the sea; M.4., the mutable air, with impenetrable space above, and finally F.4., the thin crust of the earth masking the interior energies of the planet. They go in to double these Kwâ, thus reaching the sixty-four Hexagrams of the *Yî King*, which is not only a Map, but a History of the Order of Nature.

It is pure enthusiastic delight in the Harmony and Beauty of the System that has led me thus far afield; my one essential purpose is to show how the Universe was derived by these Wise Men from Nothing.

When you have assimilated these two sets of Equations, when you have understood how 0 = 2 is the unique, the simple, and the necessary solution of the Riddle of the Universe, there will be, in a sense, little more for you to learn about the Theory of Magick.

You should, however, remember most constantly that the equation of the Universe, however complex it may seem, inevitably reels out to Zero; for to accomplish this is the formula of your Work as a Mystic. To remind you, and to amplify certain points of the above, let me quote from *Magick* pp. 152-3 footnote 2.

All elements must at one time have been separate—that would be the case with great heat. Now when atoms get to the sun, we get that immense extreme heat, and all the elements are themselves again. Imagine that each atom of each element possesses the memory of all his adventures in combination. By the way, that atom (fortified with that memory) would not be the same atom; yet it is, because it has gained nothing from anywhere except this memory. Therefore, by the lapse of time, and by virtue of memory, a thing could become something more than itself; thus a real development is possible. One can then see a reason for any element deciding to go through this series of incarnations, because so, and only so, can he go; and he suffers the lapse of memory which he has during these incarnations, because he knows he will come through un- changed.

Therefore you can have an infinite number of gods, individual and equal though diverse, each one supreme and utterly indestructible. This is also the only explanation of how a "Perfect Being" could create a world in which war, evil, *etc*., exist. God is only an appearance, because (like "good") it cannot affect the substance itself, but only multiply its combinations. This is something the same as mystic monotheism; but all parts of himself, so that their interplay is false. If we presuppose many elements, their interplay is natural.

It is no objection to this theory to ask who made the elements—the elements are at least there, and God, when you look for him, is not there. Theism is *obscurum per obscurius*. A male star is built up from the centre outwards; a female from the circumference inwards. This is what is meant when we say that woman has no soul. It explains fully the difference between the sexes.

Every "act of love under will" has the dual result (1) the creation of a child combining the qualities of its parents, (2) the withdrawal by ecstasy into Nothingness. Please consult what I have elsewhere written on "The Formula of Tetragrammaton;" the importance of this at the moment is to show how 0 and 2 appear constantly in Nature as the common Order of Events.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

1: Add comments to distinguish indices (Abstract Algebra) from powers of numbers. I shouldn't, but as a physicist, I have to say that Crowley is giving an erroneous layman's opinion and his usage of math notation cannot be

considered correct. These expressions are ok as text, but not as math without redefinition through Abstract Algebra, a field Crowley appears not to know by name. The ideas are valid, but the expressions are misleading. It might be wise to add a footnote about the notation being non-traditional. Notably, this line defies Pythagoras! Crowley's notation with superscripts is the problem. It looks like powers of numbers instead of indices. He probably intended indices, but didn't know how to represent them or flag them in typography – WEH.

The problem is that Crowley's later reasoning, in particular his calculations of the value of 00 only make sense if he means powers. Now there is nothing per se to stop us representing his “categories” in terms of an n-dimensional space, but each category is incommensurable with the others – T.S.

2: This is bogus math, plain and simple. If d1, d2, … dn are the dimensions in n dimensional space of our object, the volume of n-dimensional space it occupies will be d1 × d2 × … ×dn; if we multiply each dimension by x, the volume of the whole thing is multiplied by xn. As noted above, the way Crowley develops the argument indicates he is thinking of powers but his use thereof at this point is wrong – T.S.

Chapter 6

The Three Schools of Magick [I]

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Here is the first section of M. Gerard Aumont's promised essay;* it was originally called “The Three Schools of Magick.” (Don't be cross, please, because it is not in the form of a personal letter!)

There is today much misunderstanding of the meaning of the term “Magick.” Many attempts have been made to define it, but perhaps the best for our present purpose of historical-ideological exposition will be this—Magick is the Science of the Incommensurables.

This is one of the many restricted uses of the word; one suited to the present purpose.

It is particularly to be noted that Magick, so often mixed up in the popular idea of a religion, has nothing to do with it. It is, in fact, the exact opposite of religion; it is, even more than Physical Science, its irreconcilable enemy.

Let us define this difference clearly.

Magick investigates the laws of Nature with the idea of making use of them. It only differs from “profane” science by always keeping ahead of it. As Fraser has shown, Magick is science in the tentative stage; but it may be, and often is, more than this. It is science which, for one reason or another, cannot be declared to the profane.

Religion, on the contrary, seeks to ignore the laws of Nature, or to escape them by appeal to a postulated power which is assumed to have laid them down. The religious man is, as such, incapable of understanding what the laws of Nature really are. (They are generalizations from the order of observed fact.)

The History of Magick has never been seriously attempted. For one reason, only initiates pledged to secrecy know much about it; for another, every historian has been talking about some more or less conventional idea of Magick, not of the thing itself. But Magick has led the world from before the beginning of history, if only for the reason that Magick has always been the mother of Science. It is, therefore, of extreme importance that some effort should be made to understand something of the subject; and there is, therefore, no apology necessary for essaying this brief outline of its historical aspects.

* A few amendments—very few—have been necessitated by the lapse of time.

There have always been, at least in nucleus, three main Schools of Philosophical practice. (We use the word "philosophical" in the old good broad sense, as in the phrase "Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society for the Advancement of Knowledge.")

It is customary to describe these three Schools as Yellow, Black, and White. The first thing necessary is to warn the reader that they must by no means be confounded with racial distinctions of colour; and they correspond still less with conventional symbols such as yellow caps, yellow robes, black magick, white witchcraft, and the like. The danger is only the greater that these analogies are often as alluring as the prove on examination to be misleading.

These Schools represent three perfectly distinct and contrary theories of the Universe, and, therefore, practices of spiritual science. The magical formula of each is as precise as a theorem of trigonometry. Each assumes as fundamental a certain law of Nature, and the subject is complicated by the fact that each School, in a certain sense, admits the formulæ of the other two. It merely regards them as in some way incomplete, secondary, or illusory. Now, as will be seen later, the Yellow School stand aloof from the other two by the nature of its postulates. But the Black School and the White are always more or less in active conflict; and it is because just at this moment that conflict is approaching a climax that it is necessary to write this essay. The adepts of the White School consider the present danger to mankind so great that they are prepared to abandon their traditional policy of silence, in order to enlist in their ranks the profane of every nation.

We are in possession of a certain mystical document* which we may describe briefly, for convenience sake, as an Apocalypse of which we hold the keys, thanks to the intervention of the Master who has appeared at this grave conjuncture of Fate. This document consists of a series of visions, in which we hear the various Intelligences whose nature it would be hard to define, but who are at the very least endowed with knowledge and power far beyond anything that we are accustomed to regard as proper to the human race.

We must quote a passage from one of the most important of these documents. The doctrine is conveyed, as is customary among Initiates, in the form of a parable. Those who have attained even a mediocre degree of enlightenment are aware that the crude belief of the faithful, and the crude infidelity of the scoffer, with regard to matters of fact, are merely childish. Every incident in Nature, true or false, possesses a spiritual significance. It is this significance, and only this significance, that possesses any philosophical value to the Initiate.

The orthodox need not be shocked, and the enlightened need not be contemptuous, to learn that the passage which we are about to quote, is a parable based on the least decorous of the Biblical legends which refer to Noah.1 It simply captures for its own purposes the convenience of Scripture.

* *Liber CDXVIII, The Vision and the Voice*, edition with Introduction and Commentary by 666. Thelema Publishing Co., Barstow, California.2

(Here follows the excerpt from the Vision.)

And a voice cries: Cursed be he that shall uncover the nakedness of the Most High, for he is drunken upon the wine that is the blood of the adepts. And BABALON hath lulled him to sleep upon her breast, and she hath fled away, and left him naked, and she hath called her children together saying: Come up with me, and let us make a mock of the nakedness of the Most High.

And the first of the adepts covered His shame with a cloth, walking backwards, and was white. And the second of the adepts covered his shame with a cloth, walking sideways, and was yellow. And the third of the adepts made a mock of His nakedness, walking forwards, and was black. And these are the three great schools of the Magi, who are also the three Magi that journeyed unto Bethlehem; and

because thou hast not wisdom, thou shalt not know which school prevaileth, or if the three schools be not one.**

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* This doctrine of the Three Schools is of extreme interest. Roughly, it may be said that the White is the Pure Mystic, whose attitude to God is one of reverence. The Yellow School conceals the Mysteries indeed, but examines them as it goes along. The Black School is that of pure Scepticism.3

We are now ready to study the philosophical bases of these three Schools.

We must, however, enter a caveat against too literal an interpretation, even of the parable. It may be suspected, for reasons which should be apparent after further investigation of the doctrines of the Three Schools, that this parable was invented by an Intelligence of the Black School, who was aware of his iniquity, and thought to transform it into righteousness by the alchemy of making a boast of it. The intelligent reader will note the insidious attempt to identify the doctrine of the Black School with the kind of black magic that is commonly called Diabolism. In other words, this parable is itself an example of an exceedingly subtle black magical operation, and the contemplation of such devices carried far enough beings us to an understanding of the astoundingly ophidian processes of Magicians. Let not the profane reader dismiss such subtleties from his mind as negligible nonsense. It is cunning of this kind that determines the price of potatoes.

The above digression is perhaps not so inexcusable as it may seem on a first reading. Careful study of it should reveal the nature of the thought-processes which are habitually used by the secret Masters of the human race to determine its destiny.

When everyone has done laughing, I will ask you to compare the real effects produced on the course of human affairs by Caesar, Attila, and Napoleon, on the one hand; of Plato, the Encyclopaedists, and Karl Marx* on the other.

The Yellow School of Magick considers, with complete scientific and philosophical detachment, the fact of the Universe as a fact. Being itself apart of that Universe, it realizes its impotence to alter the totality in the smallest degree. To put it vulgarly, it does not try to raise itself from the ground by pulling at its socks. It therefore opposes to the current of phenomena no reaction either of hatred

or of sympathy. So far as it attempts to influence the course of events at all, it does so in the only intelligent way conceivable. It seeks to diminish internal friction.

It remains, therefore, in a contemplative attitude. To use the terms of Western philosophy, there is in its attitude something of the stoicism of Zeno; or of the Pickwickianism, if I may use the term, of Epicurus. The ideal reaction to phenomena is that of perfect elasticity. It possesses something of the cold-bloodedness of mathematics; and for this reason it seems fair to say, for the purposes of elementary study, that Pythagoras is its most adequate exponent in European philosophy.

Since the discovery of Asiatic thought, however, we have no need to take our ideas at second-hand. The Yellow School of Magick possesses one perfect classic. The *Tao Teh* K*ing*.†

It is impossible to find any religion which adequately represents the thought of this masterpiece. Not only is religion as such repugnant to science and philosophy, but from the very nature of the tenets of the Yellow School, its adherents are not going to put themselves to any inconvenience for the enlightenment of a lot of people whom they consider to be hopeless fools.

At the same time, the theory of religion, as such, being a tissue of falsehood, the only real strength of any religion is derived from its pilferings of Magical doctrine; and, religious persons being by definition entirely unscrupulous, it follows that any given religion is likely to contain scraps of Magical doctrine, filched more or less haphazard from one school or the other as occasion serves.

Let the reader, therefore, beware most seriously of trying to get a grasp of this subject by means of siren analogies. Taoism has as little to do with the *Tao Teh* K*ing* as the Catholic Church with the Gospel.

The *Tao Teh* K*ing* inculcates conscious inaction, or rather unconscious inaction, with the object of minimizing the disorder of the world. A few quotations from the text should make the essence of the doctrine clear.**4**

X 3 Here is the Mystery of Virtue. It createth all and nourisheth all; yet it doth not adhere to them. It operateth all; but knoweth not of it, nor proclaimeth it; it directeth all, but without conscious control.

XXII 2 Therefore the sage concentrateth upon one Will, and it is as a light to the whole world. Hiding himself, he shineth; withdrawing himself, he attracteth notice; humbling himself, he gaineth force to achieve his Will. Because he striveth not, no man may contend against him.

XLIII 1 The softest substance hunteth down the hardest. The Unsubstantial penetrateth where there is no opening. Here is the Virtue of Inertia.

2 Few are they who attain: whose speech is Silence, whose Work is Inertia.

XLVIII 3 He who attracteth to himself all that is under Heaven doth so without effort. He who maketh effort is not able to attract it.

LVIII 3 The wise man is foursquare and avoideth aggression; his corners do not injure others. He moveth in a straight line, and turneth not aside therefrom; he is brilliant, but doth not blind with his brightness.

LXIII 2 Do great things while they are yet small, hard things while they are yet easy; for all things, how great or hard soever, have a beginning when they are little and easy. So thus the wise man accomplisheth the greatest tasks without undertaking anything important.

LXXVI 2 So then rigidity and hardness are the stigmata of death; elasticity and adaptability of life.

3 He then who putteth forth strength is not victorious; even as a strong tree filleth the embrace.

4 Thus the hard and rigid have the inferior place, the soft and elastic the superior.

Enough, I think, for this part of the essay.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

* It is interesting to note that the three greatest influences in the world today are those of Teutonic Hebrews: Marx, Hertz, and Freud.

† Unfortunately there is no translation at present published which is the work of an Initiate. All existing translations have been garbled by people who simply failed to understand the text. An approximately perfect rendering is indeed available, but so far it exists only in manuscript. One object of this letter is to create sufficient public interest to make this work, and others of equal value available to the public.5

1: Genesis IX, 20-23.

2: This volume is now virtually unobtainable. See rather Equinox IV (2), The Vision and the Voice with Commentary and other papers, York Beach, Maine: Samuel Weiser, 1998. The passage quoted appears in the 6th Æthyr – T.S..

3: This note is from Crowley's commentary to The Vision and the Voice (see references in note above). Also, in a marginal note to his copy of Equinox I (5), Crowley wrote against "… or if the three schools be not one." the remark: "They are. Θηριον 9○=2□", implying that having become a Magus he now did know this – T.S.

4: All these quotations are from Crowley's rendition of the Tao Teh King (Liber CLVII), for more information on which see Letter XXXV – T.S.

5: This footnote is obsolete. The "Tao Teh King" was published as Equinox III (8), 1975 e.v. by H.P.S. – WEH. Also as Aleister Crowley's Tao Teh King, edited by Stephen Skinner, London: Askin and New York: Samuel Weiser, 1976, and a new edition (also with the Equinox series title, and with Crowley's Liber XXI in an appendix) Weiser, 1995 – T.S.

Chapter 7

The Three Schools of Magick [II]

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Hoping that you are now recovered from the devastating revelations in the matter of the Yellow School, I must ask you to brace yourself for disclosures even more formidable about the Black. Do not confuse with the Black Lodge, or the Black Brothers. The terminology is unfortunate, but it wasn't I that did it. Now then, to work!

The Black School of Magick, which must by no means be confused with the School of Black Magick or Sorcery, which latter is a perversion of the White tradition, is distinguished fundamentally from the Yellow School in that it considers the Universe not as neutral, but as definitely a curse. Its primary theorem is the "First Noble Truth" of the Buddha—"Everything is Sorrow." In the primitive classics of this School the idea of sorrow is confused with that of sin. (This idea of universal lamentation is presumably responsible for the choice of black as its symbolic colour. And yet? Is not white the Chinese hue of mourning?)

The analysis of the philosophers of this School refers every phenomenon to the category of sorrow. It is quite useless to point out to them that certain events are accompanied with joy: they continue their ruthless calculations, and prove to your satisfaction, or rather dissatisfaction, that the more apparently pleasant an event is, the more malignantly deceptive is its fascination. There is only one way of escape even conceivable, and this way is quite simple, annihilation. (Shallow critics of Buddhism have wasted a great deal of stupid ingenuity on trying to make out that Nirvana or Nibbana means something different from what etymology, tradition and the evidence of the Classics combine to define it. The word means, quite simply, cessation: and it stands to reason that, if everything is sorrow, the only thing which

is not sorrow is nothing, and that therefore to escape from sorrow is the attainment of nothingness.)

Western philosophy has on occasion approached this doctrine. It has at least asserted that no known form of existence is exempt from sorrow. Huxley says, in his *Evolution and Ethics*, "Suffering is the badge of all the tribe of sentient things."

The philosophers of this School, seeking, naturally enough, to amend the evil at the root, inquire into the cause of this existence which is sorrow, and arrive immediately at the "Second Noble Truth" of the Buddha: "The Cause of Sorrow is Desire." They follow up with the endless concatenation of causes, of which the final root is Ignorance. (I am not concerned to defend the logic of this School: I merely state their doctrine.) The practical issue of all this is that every kind of action is both unavoidable and a crime. I must digress to explain that the confusion of thought in this doctrine is constantly recurrent. That is part of the blackness of the Ignorance which they confess to be the foundation of their Universe. (And after all, everyone has surely the right to have his own Universe the way he wants it.)

This School being debased by nature, is not so far removed from conventional religion as either the White or the Yellow. Most primitive fetishistic religions may, in fact, be considered fairly faithful representatives of this philosophy. Where animism holds sway, the "medicine-man" personifies this universal evil, and seeks to propitiate it by human sacrifice. The early forms of Judaism, and that type of Christianity which we associate with the Salvation Army, Billy Sunday and the Fundamentalists of the back-blocks of America, are sufficiently simple cases of religion whose essence is the propitiation of a malignant demon.

When the light of intelligence begins to dawn dimly through many fogs upon these savages, we reach a second stage. Bold spirits master courage to assert that the evil which is so obvious, is, in some mysterious way, an illusion. They thus throw back the whole complexity of sorrow to a single cause; that is, the arising of the illusion aforesaid. The problem then assumes a final form: How is that illusion to be destroyed.

A fairly pure example of the first stage of this type of thought is to be found in the *Vedas*, of the second stage, in the *Upanishads*. But the answer to the question, "How is the illusion of evil to be destroyed?", depends on another point of theory. We may postulate a Parabrahm infinitely good, etc. etc. etc., in which case we consider the destruction of the illusion of evil as the reuniting of the consciousness with Parabrahm. The unfortunate part of this scheme of things is that on seeking to

define Parabrahm for the purpose of returning to Its purity, it is discovered sooner or later, that It possesses no qualities at all! In other words, as the farmer said, on being shown the elephant: There ain't no sich animile. It was Gautama Buddha who perceived the inutility of dragging in this imaginary pachyderm. Since our Parabrahm, he said to the Hindu philosophers, is actually nothing, why not stick to or original perception that everything is sorrow, and admit that the only way to escape from sorrow is to arrive at nothingness?

We may complete the whole tradition of the Indian peninsula very simply. To the *Vedas*, the *Upanishads*, and the *Tripitaka* of the Buddhists, we have only to add the *Tantras* of what are called the Vamacharya Schools. Paradoxical as it may sound the Tantrics are in reality the most advanced of the Hindus. Their theory is, in its philosophical ultimatum, a primitive stage of the White tradition, for the essence of the Tantric cults is that by the performance of certain rites of Magick, one does not only escape disaster, but obtains positive benediction. The Tantric is not obsessed by the will-to-die. It is a difficult business, no doubt, to get any fun out of existence; but at least it is not impossible. In other words, he implicitly denies the fundamental proposition that existence is sorrow, and he formulates the essential postulate of the White School of Magick, that means exist by which the universal sorrow (apparent indeed to all ordinary observation) may be unmasked, even as at the initiatory rite of Isis in the ancient days of Khem. There, a Neophyte presenting his mouth, under compulsion, to the pouting buttocks of the Goat of Mendez, found himself caressed by the chaste lips of a virginal priestess of that Goddess at the base of whose shrine is written that No man has lifted her veil.

The basis of the Black philosophy is not impossibly mere climate, with its resulting etiolation of the native, its languid, bilious, anaemic, fever-prostrated, emasculation of the soul of man. We accordingly find few true equivalents of this School in Europe. In Greek philosophy there is no trace of any such doctrine. The poison in its foulest and most virulent form only entered with Christianity.* But even so, few men of any real eminence were found to take the axioms of pessimism seriously. Huxley, for all of his harping on the minor key, was an eupeptic Tory. The culmination of the Black philosophy is only found in Schopenhauer, and we may regard him as having been obsessed, on the one hand, by the despair born of that false scepticism which he learnt from the bankruptcy of Hume and Kant; on the other, by the direct obsession of the Buddhist documents to which he was one of the earliest Europeans to obtain access. He was, so to speak,

driven to suicide by his own vanity, a curious parallel to Kiriloff in *The Possessed* of Dostoiewsky.

We have, however, examples plentiful enough of religions deriving almost exclusively from the Black tradition in the different stages. We have already mentioned the Evangelical cults with their ferocious devil-god who creates mankind for the pleasure of damning it and forcing it to crawl before him, while he yells with drunken glee over the agony of his only son.† But in the same class, we must place Christian Science, so grotesquely afraid of pain, suffering and evil of every sort, that its dupes can think of nothing better than to bleat denials of its actuality, in the hope of hypnotizing themselves into anaesthesia.

Practically no Westerns have reached the third stage of the Black tradition, the Buddhist stage. It is only isolated mystics, and those men who rank themselves with a contemptuous compliance under the standard of the nearest religion, the one which will bother them least in their quest of nothingness, who carry the sorites so far.

The documents of the Black School of Magick have already been indicated. They are, for the most part, tedious to the last degree and repulsive to every wholesome-minded man; yet it can hardly be denied that such books as *The Dhammapada* and *Ecclesiastes* are masterpieces of literature. They represent the agony of human despair at its utmost degree of intensity, and the melancholy contemplation which is induced by their perusal is not favourable to the inception of that mood which should lead every truly courageous intelligence to the determination to escape from the ferule of the Black Schoolmaster to the outstretched arms of the White Mistress of Life.

* Anti-semite writers in Europe—e.g. Weininger—call the Black theory and practice Judaism, while by a curious confusion, the same ideas are called Christian among Anglo-Saxons. In 1936 e.v. the “Nazi” School began to observe this fact.

† N.B. Christianity was in its first stage a Jewish Communism, hardly distinguishable from Marxism.

Let us leave the sinister figure of Schopenhauer for the mysteriously radiant shape of Spinoza! This latter philosopher, in respect at least of his Pantheism, represents

fairly enough the fundamental thesis of the White tradition. Almost the first observation that we have to make is that this White tradition is hardly discoverable outside Europe. It appears first of all in the legend of Dionysus. (In this connection read carefully Browning's *Apollo and the Fates*.)

The Egyptian tradition of Osiris is not dissimilar. The central idea of the White School is that, admitted that "everything is sorrow" for the profane, the Initiate has the means of transforming it to "Everything is joy." There is no question of any ostrich-ignoring of fact, as in Christian Science. There is not even any more or less sophisticated argument about the point of view altering the situation as in Vedantism. We have, on the contrary, and attitude which was perhaps first of all, historically speaking, defined by Zoroaster, "nature teaches us, and the Oracles also affirm, that even the evil germs of Matter may alike become useful and good." "Stay not on the precipice with the dross of Matter; for there is a place for thine Image in a realm ever splendid." "If thou extend the Fiery Mind to the work of piety, thou wilt preserve the fluxible body."**

It appears that the Levant, from Byzantium and Athens to Damascus, Jerusalem, Alexandria and Cairo, was preoccupied with the formulation of this School in a popular religion, beginning in the days of Augustus Caesar. For there are elements of this central idea in the works of the Gnostics, in certain rituals of what Frazer conveniently calls the Asiatic God, as in the remnants of the Ancient Egyptian cult. The doctrine became abominably corrupted in committee, so to speak, and the result was Christianity, which may be regarded as a White ritual overlaid by a mountainous mass of Black doctrine, like the baby of the mother that King Solomon non-suited.

We may define the doctrine of the White School in its purity in very simple terms.

Existence is pure joy. Sorrow is caused by failure to perceive this fact; but this is not a misfortune. We have invented sorrow, which does not matter so much after all, in order to have the exuberant satisfaction of getting rid of it. Existence is thus a sacrament.

Adepts of the White School regard their brethren of the Black very much as the aristocratic English Sahib (of the days when England was a nation) regarded the benighted Hindu. Nietzsche expresses the philosophy of this School to that extent with considerable accuracy and vigour. The man who denounces life merely defines himself as the man who is unequal to it. The brave man rejoices in giving and taking hard knocks, and the brave man is joyous. The Scandinavian idea of

Valhalla may be primitive, but it is manly. A heaven of popular concert, like the Christian; of unconscious repose, like the Buddhist; or even of sensual enjoyment, like the Moslem, excites his nausea and contempt. He understands that the only joy worth while is the joy of continual victory, and victory itself would become as tame as croquet if it were not spiced by equally continual defeat.

* This passage appears to be a direct hint at the Formula of the IX° O.T.O., and the preparation of the Elixir of Life.

The purest documents of the White School are found in the Sacred Books of Thelema. The doctrine is given in excellent perfection both in the book of the Heart Girt with the Serpent and the book of Lapis Lazuli. A single passage is adequate to explain the formula.

7. Moreover I beheld a vision of a river. There was a little boat thereon; and in it under purple sails was a golden woman, an image of Asi wrought in finest gold. Also the river was of blood, and the boat of shining steel. Then I loved her; and, loosing my girdle, cast myself into the stream.
8. I gathered myself into the little boat, and for many days and nights did I love her, burning beautiful incense before her.
9. Yea! I gave her of the flower of my youth.
10. But she stirred not; only by my kisses I defiled her so that she turned to blackness before me.
11. Yet I worshipped her, and gave her of the flower of my youth.
12. Also it came to pass, that thereby she sickened and corrupted before me. Almost I cast myself into the stream.
13. Then at the end appointed her body was whiter than the milk of the stars, and her lips red and warm as the sunset, and her life of a white heat like the heat of the midmost sun.
14. Then rose she up from the abyss of Ages of Sleep, and her body embraced me. Altogether I melted into her beauty and was glad.
15. The river also became the river of Amrit, and the little boat was the chariot of the flesh, and the sails thereof the blood of the heart that beareth me, that beareth me.

Liber LXV, Cap. II.

We find even in profane literature this doctrine of the White School of Magick:—**1**

O Buddha! couldst thou nowhere rest
A pivot for the universe?
Must all things be alike confessed
Mere changes rung upon a curse?

I swear by all the bliss of blue
My Phryne with her powder on
Is just as false—and just as true—
As your disgusting skeleton.

Each to his taste: if you prefer
This loathly brooding on Decay;
I call it Growth, and lovelier
Than all the glamours of the day.

You would not dally with Doreen
Because her fairness was to fade,
Because you know the things unclean
That go to make a mortal maid.

I, if her rotten corpse were mine,
Would take it as my natural food,
Denying all but the Divine
Alike in evil and in good.

Aspasia may skin me close,
And Lais load me with disease.
Poor pleasures, bitter bargains, these?
I shall despise Diogenes.

Follow your fancy far enough!
At last you surely come to God.

There is thus in this School no attempt to deny that Nature is, as Zoroaster said, “a fatal and evil force”; but Nature is, so to speak, “the First Matter of the Work”, which is to be transmuted into gold. The joy is a function of our own part in this alchemy. For this reason we find the boldest and most skillful adepts deliberately seeking out the most repugnant elements of Nature that their triumph may be the

greater. The formula is evidently one of dauntless courage. It expresses the idea of vitality and manhood in its most dynamic sense.

The only religion which corresponds to this School at all is that of ancient Egypt; possibly also that of Chaldea. This is because those religions are Magical religions in the strict technical sense; the religious component of them is negligible. So far as it exists, it exists only for the uninitiate.

There are, however, traces of the beginning of the influence of the School in Judaism and in Paganism. There are, too, certain documents of the pure Greek spirit which bear traces of this. It is what they called Theurgy.

The Christian religion in its simplest essence, by that idea of overcoming evil through a Magical ceremony, the Crucifixion, seems at first sight a fair example of the White tradition; but the idea of sin and of propitiation tainted it abominably with Blackness. There have been, however, certain Christian thinkers who have taken the bold logical step of regarding evil as a device of God for exercising the joys of combat and victory. This is, of course, a perfectly White doctrine; but it is regarded as the most dangerous of heresies. (Romans VI. 1,2, et al.)

For all that, the idea is there. The Mass itself is essentially a typical White ritual. Its purpose is to transform crude matter directly into Godhead. It is thus a cardinal operation of Talismanic Magick. But the influence of the Black School has corroded the idea with theological accretions, metaphysical on the one hand, and superstitious on the other, so completely as to mask the Truth altogether.

At the Reformation, we find a nugatory attempt to remove the Black element. The Protestant thinkers did their best to get rid of the idea of sin, but it was soon seen that the effort could only lead to antinomianism; and they recognized that this would infallibly destroy the religious idea as such.

Mysticism, both Catholic and Protestant, made a further attempt to free Christianity from the dark cloud of iniquity. They joined hands with the Sufis and the Vedantists. But this again led to the mere denial of the reality of evil. Thus drawing away, little by little, from clear appreciation of the facts of Nature, their doctrine became purely theoretical, and faded away, while the thundercloud of sin settled down more heavily than ever.

The most important of all the efforts of the White School, from an exoteric point of view, is Islam. In its doctrine there is some slight taint, but much less than in Christianity. It is a virile religion. It looks facts in the face, and admits their horror;

but it proposes to overcome them by sheer dint of manhood. Unfortunately, the metaphysical conceptions of its quasi-profane Schools are grossly materialistic. It is only the Pantheism of the Sufis which eliminates the conception of propitiation; and, in practice, the Sufis are too closely allied to the Vedantists to retain hold of reality.

That will be all for the present.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

1: Crowley is quoting himself again; the following verses are from a poem called “Ovariotomy” which was published in Konx Om Pax – T.S.

Chapter 8

The Three Schools of Magick [III]

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

It has been a long—I hope not too tedious—voyage; but at last the harbour is in sight.

Our Essay approaches its goal; the theory of Life to which initiation tends.

Let us continue!

There is in history only one movement whose object has been to organize the isolated adepts of the White School of Magick, and this movement was totally unconnected with religion, except in so far as it lent its influence to the reformers of the Christian church. Its appeal was not at all to the people. It merely offered to open up relations with, and communicate certain practical secrets of wisdom to, isolated men of science through Europe. This movement is generally known by the name of Rosicrucianism.

The word arouses all sorts of regrettable correspondences; but the adepts of the Society have never worried themselves in the least about the abuse of their name for the purposes of charlatanism, or about the attacks directed against them by envious critics. Indeed, so wisely have they concealed their activities that some modern scholars of the shallower type have declared that no such movement ever existed, that it was a kind of practical joke played upon the curiosity of the credulous Middle Ages. It is at least certain that, since the original proclamations, no official publications have been put forward. The essential secrets have been maintained inviolate. If, during the last few years, a considerable number of documents have been published by them, though not in their name, it is on account of the impending crisis to civilization, of which mention will later be made.

There is no good purpose, even were there license, to discuss the nature of the basis of scientific attainment which is the core of the doctrines of the Society. It is only necessary to point out that its correspondence with alchemy is the one genuine fact on the subject which has been allowed to transpire; for the Rosicrucian, as indicated by his central symbol, the barren cross on which he has made a rose to flower, occupies himself primarily with spiritual and physiological alchemy. Taking for "The First Matter of the Work a neutral or inert substance (it is constantly described as the commonest and least valued thing on earth, and may actually connote any substance whatever) he deliberately poisons it, so to speak, bringing it to a stage of transmutation generally called the Black Dragon, and he proceeds to work upon this virulent poison until he obtains the perfection theoretically possible.

Incidentally, we have an almost precise parallel with this operation in modern bacteriology. The apparently harmless bacilli of a disease are cultivated until they become a thousand times more virulent than at first, and it is from this culture that is prepared the vaccine which is an efficacious remedy for all the possible ravages of that kind of micro-organism.

. . . .

We have been obliged to expose, perhaps at too considerable a length, the main doctrines of the three Schools. The task, however tedious, has been necessary in order to explain with reasonable lucidity their connection with the world which their ideas direct; that is to say, the nature of their political activities.

The Yellow School, in accordance with its doctrine of perfectly elastic reaction and non-interference, holds itself, generally speaking, entirely apart from all such questions. We can hardly imagine it sufficiently interested in any events soever to react aggressively. It feels strong enough to deal satisfactorily with anything that may turn up: and generally speaking, it feels that any conceivable action on its part would be likely to increase rather than to diminish the mischief.

It remains somewhat contemptuously aloof from the eternal conflict of the Black School with the White. At the same time, there is a certain feeling among the Yellow adepts that should either of these Schools become annihilated, the result might well be that the victor would sooner or later turn his released energy against themselves.

In accordance, therefore, with their general plan of non-action, as expressed in the *Tao Teh* K*ing*, of dealing with mischief before it has become too strong to be dangerous, they interfere gently from time to time to redress the balance.

During the last two generations the Masters of the Yellow School have been compelled to take notice of the progressive ruin of the White adepts. Christianity, which possessed at least the semblance of a White formula, is in the agonies of decomposition, even before it is actually dead. Materialistic science has overwhelmed the faith and hope of the Christians (they never possessed any charity to overwhelm) with a demonstration of the sorrow, transitoriness and cruel futility of the Universe. A vast wave of pessimism has engulfed the fortress of Mansoul.

It was indeed a deadly blow to the adepts of the White School when Science, their own familiar friend in whom they trusted, lifted up his heel against them. It was in this conjuncture that the Yellow adepts sent forth into the Western world a messenger, Helena Petrowna Blavatsky, with the distinct mission to destroy, on the one hand, the crude schools of Christianity, and, on the other, to eradicate the materialism from Physical Science. She made the necessary connection with Edward Maitland and Anna Kingsford, who were trying rather helplessly to put the exoteric formulae of the White School into the hands of students, and with the secret representatives of the Rosicrucian Brotherhood. It is not for us in this place to estimate the degree of success with which she carried out her embassy; but at least we see today that Physical Science is at last penetrating to the spiritual basis of material phenomena. The work of Henry Poincarè, Einstein, Whitehead, and Bertrand Russell is sufficient evidence of this fact.

Christianity, too, has fallen into a lower degree of contempt than ever. Realizing that it was moribund, it made a supreme and suicidal effort, and plunged into the death-spasm of the first world-war. It was too far corrupt to react to the injections of the White formula which might have saved it. We see today that Christianity is more bigoted, further divorced from reality, than ever. In some countries it has again become a persecuting church.

With horrid glee the adepts of the Black School looked on at these atrocious paroxysms. But it did more. It marshalled its forces quietly, and prepared to clean up the debris of the battlefields. It is at present (1924 e.v.) pledged to a supreme attempt to chase the manly races from their spiritual halidom. (The spasm still

[1945 e.v.] continues; note well the pro-German screams of Anglican Bishops, and the intrigues of the Vatican.)

The Black School has always worked insidiously, by treachery. We need then not be surprised by finding that its most notable representative was the renegade follower of Blavatsky, Annie Besant, and that she was charged by her Black masters with the mission of persuading the world to accept for its Teacher a negroid**1** Messiah. To make the humiliation more complete, a wretched creature was chosen who, to the most loathsome moral qualities, added the most fatuous imbecility. And then blew up!

. . . .

This, then, is the present state of the war of the Three Schools. We cannot suppose that humanity is so entirely base as to accept Krishnamurti; yet that such a scheme could ever have been conceived is a symptom of the almost hopeless decadence of the White School.***** The Black adepts boast openly that they have triumphed all along the line. Their formula has attained the destruction of all positive qualities. It is only one step to the stage when the annihilation of all life and thought will appear as a fatal necessity. The materialism and vital scepticism of the present time, its frenzied rush for pleasure in total disregard of any idea of building for the future, testifies to a condition of complete moral disorder, of abject spiritual anarchy.

The White School has thus been paralysed. We are reminded of the spider described by Fabre, who injects her victims with a poison which paralyzes them without killing them, so that her own young may find fresh meat. And this is what is going to happen in Europe and America unless some- thing is done about it, and done in very short order.

* Note. This passage was written in 1924 e.v. The Master Therion arose and smote him. What seemed a menace is now hardly even a memory.

The Yellow School could not remain impassive spectators of the abominations. Madame Blavatsky was a mere forerunner. They, in conjunction with the Secret Chiefs of the White School in Europe, Chiefs who had been compelled to suspend all attempts at exoteric enlightenment by the general moral debility which had

overtaken the races from which they drew their adepts, have prepared a guide for mankind. This man, of an extreme moral force and elevation, combined with a profound sense of worldly realities, has stood forth in an attempt to save the White School, to rehabilitate its formula, and to fling back from the bastions of moral freedom the howling savages of pessimism. Unless his appeal is heard, unless there comes a truly virile reaction against the creeping atrophy which is poisoning them, unless they enlist to the last man under his standard, a great decisive battle will have been lost.

This prophet of the White School, chosen by its Masters and his brethren, to save the Theory and Practice, is armed with a sword far mightier than Excalibur. He has been entrusted with a new Magical formula, one which can be accepted by the whole human race. Its adoption will strengthen the Yellow School by giving a more positive value to their Theory; while leaving the postulates of the Black School intact, it will transcend them and raise their Theory and Practice almost to the level of the Yellow. As to the White School, it will remove from them all taint of poison of the Black, and restore vigour to their central formula of spiritual alchemy by giving each man an independent ideal. It will put an end to the moral castration involved in the assumption that each man, whatever his nature, should deny himself to follow out a fantastic and impracticable ideal of goodness. Incidentally, this formula will save Physical Science itself by making negligible the despair of futility, the vital scepticism which has emasculated it in the past. It shows that the joy of existence is not in a goal, for that indeed is clearly unattainable, *but in the going* itself.

This law is called the Law of Thelema. It is summarized in the four words, “Do what thou wilt.”

It should not be necessary to explain that a full appreciation of this message is not to be obtained by a hasty examination. It is essential to study it from every point of view, to analyse it with the keenest philosophical acumen, and finally to apply it as a key for every problem, internal and external, that exists. This key, applied with skill, will open every lock.

From the deepest point of view, the greatest value of this formula is that it affords, for the first time in history, a basis of reconciliation between the three great Schools of Magick. It will tend to appease the eternal conflict by understanding that each type of thought shall go on its own way, develop its own proper qualities

without seeking to inter- fere with other formulae, however (superficially) opposed to its own.

What is true for every School is equally true for every individual. Success in life, on the basis of the Law of Thelema, implies severe self-discipline. Each being must progress, as biology teaches, by strict adaptation to the conditions of the organism. If, as the Black School continually asserts, the cause of sorrow is desire, we can still escape the conclusion by the Law of Thelema. What is necessary is not to seek after some fantastic ideal, utterly unsuited to our real needs, but to discover the true nature of those needs, to fulfill them, and rejoice therein.

This process is what is really meant by initiation; that is to say, the going into oneself, and making one's peace, so to speak, with all the forces that one finds there.

It is forbidden here to discuss the nature of The Book of the Law, the Sacred Scripture of Thelema. Even after forty years of close expert examination, it remains to a great extent mysterious; but the little we know of it is enough to show that it is a sublime synthesis of all Science and all ethics. It is by virtue of this Book that man may attain a degree of freedom hitherto never suspected to be possible, a spiritual development altogether beyond anything hitherto known; and, what is really more to the point, a control of external nature which will make the boasted achievements of the last century appear no more than childish preliminaries to an incomparably mighty manhood.

It has been said by some that the Law of Thelema appeals only to the élite of humanity. No doubt here is this much in that assertion, that only the highest can take full advantage of the extraordinary opportunities which it offers. At the same time, “the Law is for all.” Each in his degree, every man may learn to realise the nature of his own being, and to develop it in freedom. It is by this means that the White School of Magick can justify its past, redeem its present, and assure its future, by guaranteeing to every human being a life of Liberty and of Love.

Such, then, are the words of Gérard Aumont. I should not like to endorse every phrase; but the whole exposition is so masterly in its terse, tense vigour, and so unrivalled by any other document at my disposal, that I thought it best to let you have it in its own original form, with only those few alterations which lapse of time has made necessary.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

P.S. Our own School unites the ruby red of Blood with the gold of the Sun. It combines the best characteristics of the Yellow and the White Schools. In the light of M. Aumont's exposition, it is easy to understand.

To us, every phenomenon is an Act of Love, every experience is necessary, is a Sacrament, is a means of Growth. Hence, "…existence is pure joy;…" (AL II, 9) "A feast every day in your hearts in the joy of my rapture! A feast every night unto Nu, and the pleasure of uttermost delight!" (AL II, 42-43).

Let this soak in!

1: Inject something about Krishnamurti here, and soften the racial remark made above – WEH.

Jiddu Krishnamurti (1895-1986): about 1909, while a boy in Adyar (the Indian base of the Theosophical Society), he was "discovered" by C.W. Leadbeater, then one of the leading lights of the Society; Leadbeater claimed that Krishnamurti was to be the "World Teacher", a kind of universal Messiah figure. In 1911 Leadbeater and Annie Besant set up an organisation called "The Order of the Star in the East" as a vehicle for Krishnamurti. The culmination of this campaign came in 1925; about the same time Crowley issued four broadsheets ("To Man" (a.k.a. the Mediterranean Manifesto), "The World Teacher to the Theosophical Society," "The Avenger to the Theosophical Society" and "Madame Tussaud-Besant" in which he staked his own claim to World Teacherdom. In 1929 Krishnamurti disowned the Toshosopists and went his own way; the Order of the Star in the East collapsed shortly afterwards. Source for most of this; Encyclopedia of the Unexplained, s.v. "Krishnamurti" and "Theosophical Society" See also Francis X. King's Sexuality, Magic and Perversion, chapter "The Bishop and the Boys" – T.S.

Chapter 9

The Secret Chiefs

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Very glad I am, since at one time I was obliged to be starkly stern about impertinent curiosity, to note that your wish to be informed about the Secret Chiefs of the A∴A∴ is justified; it is most certainly of the first importance that you and I should be quite clear in our minds about Those under whose jurisdiction and tutelage we both work.

The question is beset with thickets of tough thorn; what is worse, the path is so slippery that nothing is easier than to tumble head first into the spikiest bush of them all.

You justly remind me that one of my earliest slogans was “Mystery is the enemy of Truth;” how then is it what I acquiesce in the policy of concealment in a matter so cardinal?

Perhaps the best plan is for me to set down the facts of the case, so far as is possible, from them it may appear that no alternative policy is feasible.

The first condition of membership of the A∴A∴ is that one is sworn to identify one's own Great Work with that of raising mankind to higher levels, spiritually, and in every other way.

Accordingly, it stands to reason that those charged with the conduct of the Order should be at least Masters of the Temple, or their judgment would be worthless, and at least Magi (though not that particular kind of Magus who brings the Word of a New Formula to the world every 2,000 years of so) or they would be unable to influence events on any scale commensurate with the scope of the Work.

Of what nature is this Power, this Authority, this Understanding, this Wisdom—Will?

(I go up from Geburah to Chokmah.)

Of the passive side it is comparatively easy to form some idea; for the qualities essential are mainly extensions of those that all of us possess in some degree. And whether Understanding - Wisdom is “right” or “wrong” must be largely a matter of opinion; often Time only can decide such points.

But for the active side it is necessary to postulate the existence of a form of Energy at their disposal which is able “to cause change to occur in conformity with the Will”—one definition of “Magick.”

Now this, as you know, is an exceedingly complex subject; its theory is tortuous, and its practice encompassed with every kind of difficulty.

Is there no simple method?

Yes: the thaumaturgic engine disposes of a type of energy more adaptable than Electricity itself, and both stronger and subtler than this, its analogy in the world of profane science. One might say, that it is electrical, or at least one of the elements in the “Ring-formula” of modern Mathematical Physics.

In the R.R. et A.C., this is indicated to the Adept Minor by the title conferred upon him on his initiation to that grade: Hodos Camelionis:—the Path of the Chameleon. (This emphasizes the omnivalence of the force.) In the higher degrees of O.T.O.—the A∴A∴ is not fond of terms like this, which verge on the picturesque—it is usually called “the Ophidian Vibrations,” thus laying special stress upon its serpentine strength, subtlety, its control of life and death, and its power to insinuate itself into any desired set of circumstances.

It is of this universally powerful weapon that the Secret Chiefs must be supposed to possess complete control.

They can induce a girl to embroider a tapestry, or initiate a political movement to culminate in a world-war; all in pursuit of some plan wholly beyond the purview or the comprehension of the deepest and subtlest thinkers.

(It should go without saying that the adroit use of these vibrations enables one to perform all the classical “miracles.”)

These powers are stupendous: they seem almost beyond imagination to conceive.

“Hic ego nec metas rerum nec tempora pono;
Imperium sine fine dedi.”

as Vergil, that mighty seer and magician of Rome at her perihelion says in his First Book of the *Aenead*. (Vergil whose every line is also an Oracle, the leaves of his book more sacred, more significant, more sure than those of the Cumaean Sibyl!)

These powers move in dimensions of time and space quite other than those with which we are familiar. Their values are incomprehensible to us. To a Secret Chief, wielding this weapon, "The nice conduct of a clouded cane" might be infinitely more important than a war, famine and pestilence such as might exterminate a third part of the race, to promote whose welfare is the crux of His oath, and the sole reason of His existence!

But who *are* They?

Since They are "invisible" and "inaccessible," may They not merely be figments invented by a self-styled "Master," not quite sure of himself, to prop his tottering Authority?

Well, the "invisible" and "inaccessible" criticism may equally be leveled at Captain A. and Admiral B. of the Naval Intelligence Department. These "Secret Chiefs" keep in the dark for precisely the same reasons; and these qualities disappear instantaneously the moment *They* want to get hold of *you*.

It is written, moreover, "Let my servants be few & secret: they shall rule the many & the known." (AL I, 10)

But are They then men, in the usual sense of the word? They may be incarnate or discarnate: it is a matter of Their convenience.

Have They attained Their position by passing through all the grades of the A∴A∴?

Yes and no: the system which was given to me to put forward is only one of many. "Above the Abyss" all these technical wrinkles are ironed out. One man whom I suspect of being a Secret Chief has hardly any acquaintance with the technique of our system at all. That he accepts *The Book of the Law* is almost his only link with my work. That, and his use of the Ophidian Vibrations: I don't know which of us is better at it, but I am sure that he must be a very long way ahead of me if he is one of Them.

You have already in these pages and elsewhere in my writings examples numerous and varied of the way in which They work. The list is far from complete. The matters of Ab-ul-Diz and of Amalantrah show one method of communication; then

there is the way of direct "inspiration," as in the case of "Hermes Eimi" in New Orleans.*

Again, They may send an ordinary living man, whether one of Themselves or no I cannot feel sure, to instruct me in some task, or to set me right when I have erred. Then there have been messages conveyed by natural objects, animate or inanimate.† Needless to say, the outstanding example in my life is the whole Plan of Campaign concerning *The Book of the Law*. But is Aiwaz a man (presumably a Persian or Assyrian) and a "Secret Chief," or is He an "angel" in the sense that Gabriel is an angel? Is Ab-ul-Diz an Adept who can project himself into the aura of some woman with whom I happen to be living, although she has no previous experience of the kind, or any interest in such matters at all? Or is He a being whose existence is altogether beyond this plane, only adopting human appearance and faculties in order to make Himself sensible and intelligible to that woman?

I have never attempted to pursue any such enquiry. It was not forbidden; and yet I felt that it was! I always insisted, of course, on the strictest proof that He actually possessed the authority claimed by Him! But I felt is improper to assume any other initiative. Just a point of good manners, perhaps?

You ask whether, contact once made, I am able to renew it should I so wish. Again, yes and no. But the real answer is that no such gesture on my part can ever be necessary. For one thing, the "Chief" is so far above me that I can rely on Him to take the necessary steps, whenever contact would be useful; for another, there is one path always open which is perfectly sufficient for all possible contingencies.

Elsewhere I will explain why they picked out so woebegone a ragamuffin as myself to proclaim the Word of the Aeon, and do all the chores appur- tenant to that particular Work.

The Burden is heavier as the years go by; but—Perdurabo.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

P.S. Reading this typescript over for "literals," it struck me that you would ask, very reasonably: "But if the Secret Masters have these boundless powers, why do They allow you to be plagued by printers, held up for lack of secretaries, worried

by all sorts of practical problems? . . . Why, in a word, does anything ever go wrong?"

There are several lines of reply; coalescing, they suffice:

1. What is "wrong?" Since four wars is Their idea of "right," you may well ask by what standard you may judge events.

2. Their Work is creative; They operate on the dull mass of unrealized possibilities. Thus they meet, firstly, the opposition of Inertia; secondly, the recoil, the reaction, the rebound.

3. Things theoretically feasible are practically impossible when (*a*) desirable though their accomplishment may be, it is not the one feat essential to the particular Work in hand and the moment; (*b*) the sum total of available energy being used up by that special task, there is none available for side-issues; (*c*) the opposition, passive or active, is too strong, temporarily, to overcome.

More largely, one cannot judge how a plan is progressing when one has no precise idea what it is. A soldier is told to "attack;" he may be intended to win through, to cover a general retreat, or to gain time by deliberate sacrifice. Only the Commander in Chief knows what the order means, or why he issues it; and even he does not know the issue, or whether it will display and justify his military skill and judgment.

Our business is solely to obey orders: our responsibility ends when we have satisfied ourselves that they emanate from a source which has the right to command.

P.P.S. A visitor's story has just reminded me of the possibility that I am a Secret Chief myself without knowing it: for I have sometimes been recognized by other people as having acted as such, though I was not aware of the fact at the time.

* I will remember to give you details of these incidents when the occasion arises.

† One thing I regard from my own experience as certain: when you call, They come. The circumstances usually show that the call had been foreseen, and preparations made to answer it, long before it was made. But I suppose in some way the call has to justify the making.

Chapter 10

The Scolex School

You actually want to know how to distinguish gold from copper pyrites**1**—“fool's gold” they called it in '49 California—no! I wasn't there— or “absolute” alcohol and—Liqueur Whisky from “alki” (commercial alcohol—see Jack London's *The Princess*, a magnificent story—don't miss it!) and Wartime Scotch as sold in most British pubs in 1944, *era vulgari*.

One pretty good plan is to take a masterpiece, pick out a page at random, translate it into French or German or whatever language you like best, walk around your chair three times (so as to forget the English) and then translate it back again.

You will gather a useful impression of the value of the masterpiece by noticing the kind of difficulty that arises in the work of translation; more, by observing the effect produced on you by reading over the result; and finally, by estimating the re-translation; has the effect of the original been enhanced by the work done on it? Has it become more lucid? Has it actually given you the information which it purported to do?

(I am giving you credit for very unusual ability; this test is not easy to make; and, obviously, you may have spoilt the whole composition, especially where its value depends on its form rather than on its substance. But we are not considering poetry, or poetic prose; all we want is intelligible meaning.)

It does not follow that a passage is nonsensical because you fail to understand it; it may simply be too hard for you. When Bertrand Russell writes “We say that a function R is 'ultimately Q-convergent α' if there is a member y of the converse domain of R and the field of Q such that the value of the function for the argument y and for any argument to which y has the relation Q is a member of α.” Do we?

But you do not doubt that if you were to learn the meaning of all these unfamiliar terms, you would be able to follow his thought.

Now take a paragraph from an “occult teacher.”

What's more, I'll give you wheat, not tares; it seems terrifyingly easy for sound instruction to degenerate in to a “pi-jaw.” Here goes!

To don Nirmanakaya's humble robe is to forego eternal bliss for self, to help on man's salvation. To reach Nirvana's bliss but to renounce it, is the supreme, the final step—the highest on Renunciation's Path.**2**

Follows a common-sense comment by Frater O.M.

All this about Gautama Buddha having renounced Nirvana is apparently all a pure invention of Mme. Blavatsky, and has no authority in the Buddhist canon. The Buddha is referred to, again and again, as having 'passed away by that kind of passing away which leaves nothing whatever behind.' The account of his doing this is given in the *Mahaparinibbana Sutta*; and it was the contention of the Toshophists that this 'great, sublime Nibbana story' was something peculiar to Gautama Buddha. They began to talk about Parinibbana, super-Nibbana, as if there were some way of subtracting one from one which would leave a higher, superior kind of a nothing, or as if there were some way of blowing out a candle which would leave Moses in a much more Egyptian darkness than we ever supposed when we were children.

This is not science. This is not business. This is American Sunday journalism. The Hindu and the American are very much alike in this innocence, this 'naiveté' which demands fairy stories with ever bigger giants. They cannot bear the idea of anything being complete and done with. So, they are always talking in superlatives, and are hard put to it when the facts catch up with them, and they have to invent new superlatives. Instead of saying that there are bricks of various sizes, and specifying those sizes, they have a brick and a super-brick, and 'one' brick, and 'some' brick; and when they have got to the end they chase through the dictionary for some other epithet to brick, which shall excite the sense of wonder at the magnificent progress and super-progress—I present the American public with this word—which is supposed to have been made. Probably the whole thing is a bluff without a single fact behind it. Almost the whole of the Hindu psychology is an example of this kind of journalism. They are not content with the supreme God. The other man wishes to show off by having a supremer God than that, and when a third man comes along and finds them disputing, it is up to him to invent a supremest super-God.

It is simply ridiculous to try to add to the definition of Nibbana by this invention of Parinibbana, and only talkers busy themselves with these fantastic speculations.

The serious student minds his own business, which is the business in hand. The President of a Corporation does not pay his bookkeeper to make a statement of the countless billions of profit to be made in some future year. It requires no great ability to string a row of zeros after a significant figure until the ink runs out. What is wanted is the actual balance of the week.

The reader is most strongly urged not to permit himself to indulge in fantastic flights of thought, which are the poison of the mind, because they represent an attempt to run away from reality, a dispersion of energy and a corruption of moral strength. His business is, firstly, to know himself; secondly, to order and control himself; thirdly, to develop himself on sound organic lines little by little. The rest is only leather and prunella.

There is, however, a sense in which the service of humanity is necessary to the completeness of the Adept. He is not to fly away too far.

Some remarks on this course are given in the note to the next verse.

The student is also advised to take note of the conditions of membership of the A∴A∴

(*Equinox* III (1), Supplement pp. 57 - 59).

So much for the green tree; now for the dry!

We come down to the average popular “teacher,” the mere humbug. Read this:—

“One day quite soon an entirely different kind of electricity will be discovered which will bring as many profound changes into human living as the first type did. This new electricity will move in a finer ether than does our familiar kind, and thus will be nearer in vibration to the fifth dimension, to the innermost source of things, that realm of 'withinness' wherein all is held poised by a colossal force, that same force which is packed within the atom. Electricity number two will be unthinkably more powerful than our present electricity number one.” (V.S. Alder, *The Fifth Dimension*, p. 132)

Exhausted; I must restring my bow.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

1: If Homer can nod, so can Crowley. The mineral called “fool's gold” is actually iron pyrites, not copper. It has a brassy look, and that might account for this error – WEH.

2: Liber LXXI (Blavatsky, The Voice of the Silence &c. with a commentary by Crowley), Part II (“The Two Paths”), s. 42 (the section numbers are due to Crowley. See Equinox III (1) or IV (1) – T.S.

Chapter 11

Wolly Pomposities of the Pious “Teacher”

I do not think that it was any new kind of electricity. I think it was the passage itself that has given me neuralgia. It disgusts me beyond words.

To put the matter in a nutshell, tersely, concisely, succinctly, the world is being corrupted by all this—

Asthmatic Thinking	Torpid Thinking	Nauseous Thinking
Bovine T	Uncertain T.	Old-maidish T.
Chawbacon T.	Venomous T.	Purgative T.
Diffuse T.	Whelp T.	Querulous T.
Excretory T	Yahoo T.	Rat-riddled T.
Fog-bound T.	Zig-zag T.	Superficial T.
Gossiping T.	Ambivalent T.	Tinsel T.
Higgledy-piggledy T.	Broken T.	Unbalanced T.
Ill-mannered T.	Corked T.	Viscous T.
Jibbing T.	Disjointed T.	Windy T.
Kneeling T.	Eight-anna T.	Yapping T.
Leaden T.	Flibberty-gibbet T.	Zymotic T.

Moulting T.

Neurotic T.

Orphan T.

Peccable T.

Queasy T.

Rococo T.

Slavish T.

Hypocritical T.

Ignorant T.

Jerry-built T.

Knock-kneed T.

Lazy T.

Messy T.

Nasty T.

Oleaginous T.

Purulent T.

Slattern T.

Unkempt T.

Over-civilized T.

Glum T.

High-falutin' T.

Invertebrate T.

Jazzy T.

Knavish T.

Leucorrhoeic T.

Motheaten T.

Unsystematic T.

Void T.

Waggly T.

Atrophied T.

Bloated T.

Cancerous T.

Dull T.

Eurasian T.

Futile T.

Immature T.

Beige T.

Emaciated T.

Addled T.

Blear-eyed T.

Capsized T.

Down-at-heel T.

Evasive T.

Formless T.

Guilty T.

Lachrymose T.

Maudlin T.

Neighing T.

Odious T.

Pedestrian T.

Quavering T.

Ragbag T.

Sappy T.

Tuberculous T.

Veneered T.

Woolly T.

Flat T.

Gluey T.
Crippled T.
Foggy T.
Wordy T.
Opportunish T.
Muddy T.
Unclean T.
Flabby T.
Unsorted T.
Prim T.
Theatrical T.
Vaporous T.
Myopic T.
Flimsy T.
Unfinished T.
Mongrel T.
Irrelevant T.
Hidebound T.
Snobbish T.

Dislocated T.
Slushy T.
Teaparty T.
Negroid T.
Babbling T.
Onanistic T.
Hybrid T.
Nebulous T.
Hurried T.
Empty T.
Vain T.
Loose T.
Bloodless T.
Ersatz T.
Pontifical T.
Unripe T.
Glossy T.
Officious T.
Misleading T.

Emetic T.
Insanitary T.
Gloomy T.
Jaundiced T.
Pedantic T.
Flatulent T.
Sluttish T.
Stale T.
Mangy T.
Portentous T.
Loose T.
Wooden T.
Soapy T.
Gabbling T.
Wishful T.
Frock-coated T.
Fashionable T.
Unmanly T.
Slippery T. *

as we find in Brunton, Besant,**1** Clymer,**2** Max Heindl,**3** Ouspensky and in the catchpenny frauds of the secret-peddlers, the U.B., the O.H.M.,**4** the A.M.O.R.C.,**5** and all the other gangs of self-styled Rosicrucians; they should be hissed off the stage.

We want it dinkum! Advance Australia! Stick to your flag! March to your National Anthem:—

"Get a bloody move on! Get some bloody sense Learn the bloody art of Self-de-bloody-fence!"

So much for Buckingham!

* [Note by editor: In the original Manuscript the list of adjectives contains about 1,000 words; a small selection only has been used.]

Now that we are agreed upon the conditions to be satisfied if we are to allow that a given proposition contains a Thought at all, it is proper to turn our attention to the relative value of different kinds of thought. This question is of the very first importance: the whole theory of Education depends upon a correct standard. There are facts and facts: one would not necessarily be much the wiser if one got the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* by heart, or the Tables of Logarithms. The one aim of Mathematics, in fact—Whitehead points this out in his little *Shilling Arithmetic*—is to make one fact do the work of thousands.

What we are looking for is a working Hierarchy of Facts.

That takes us back at once to our original "addition and subtraction" remark in my letter on Mind. Classification, the first step, proceeds by putting similar things together, and dissimilar things apart.

One asset in the Audit of a fact is the amount of knowledge which it covers. $(2 + 5)^2 = 49$; $(3 + 4)^2 = 49$; $(6 + 2)^2 = 64$; $(7 + 1)^2 = 64$; $(9 + 4)^2 = 169$ are isolated facts, no more; worse, the coincidences of 49 and 64 might start the wildest phantasies in your head—"something mysterious about this." But if you write "The sum of the squares of any two numbers is the sum of the square of each plus twice their multiple"—$(a + b)^2 = a^2 + b\{^2\} + 2ab$—you have got a fact which covers every possible case, and exhibits one aspect of the nature of numbers them- selves. The

importance of a word increases as its rank, from the particular and concrete to the general and abstract. (It is curious that the highest values of all, the “Laws of Nature,” are never exactly “true” for any two persons, for one person can never observe the *identical* phenomena sensible to another, since two people cannot be in exactly the same place at exactly the same time: yet it is just these facts that are equally true for all men.)

Observe, I pray, the paramount importance of memory. From one point of view (bless your heart!) you are nothing at all but a bundle of memories. When you say “this is happening *now*,” you are a falsifier of God's sacred truth! When I say “I see a horse”, the truth is that “I record in those terms my private hieroglyphic interpretation of the unknown and unknowable phenomenon (or 'point-event') which has more or less recently taken place at the other end of my system of receiving impressions.”

(Is this clear? I do hope so; if not, make me go on at it until it is.)

Well, then! You realize, of course, how many millions or billions of memories there must be to compose any average well-trained mind. Those strings of adjectives all sprang spontaneously; I did not look them up in books of reference; so imagine the extent of my full vocabulary! And words are but the half-baked bricks with which one constructs. Millions, yes: billions probably: but there is a limit.

See to it, then, that you accept no worthless material; that you select, and select again, always in proper order and proportion; organize, structuralize your thought, always with the one aim in view of accomplishing the Great Work.

Well, now, before going further into this, I must behave like an utter cad, and disgrace my family tree, and blot my 'scutcheon and my copybook by confusing you about “realism.” Excuse: not my muddle; it was made centuries ago by a gang of curséd monks, headed by one Duns Scotus—so-called because he was Irish—or if not by somebody else equally objectionable. They held to the Platonic dogma of archetypes. They maintained that there was an original (divine) idea such as “greenness” or a “pig,” and that a green pig, as observed in nature, was just one example of these two ideal essences. They were opposed by the “nominalists,” who said, to the contrary, that “greenness” or “a pig” were nothing in themselves; they were mere names (nominalism from Lat. *nomen,* a name) invented for convenience of grouping. This doctrine is plain commonsense, and I shall waste no time in demolishing the realists.

All *à priori* thinking, the worst kind of thinking, goes with “realism” in this sense.

And now you look shocked and surprised! And no wonder! What (you exclaim) is the whole Qabalistic doctrine but the very apotheosis of this “realism”? (It was also called “idealism”, apparently to cheer and comfort the student on his rough and rugged road!) Is not Atziluth the “archetypal world?” is not—

Oh, all right, all *right*! Keep your blouse on! I didn't go for to do it. You're quite right: the Tree of Life *is* like that, in appearance. But that is the wrong way to look at it. We get our number two, for example, as “that which is common to a bird's legs, a man's ears, twins, the cube root of eight, the greater luminaries, the spikes of a pitchfork,” *etc*. but, having got it, we must not go on to argue that the number two being possessed of this and that property, therefore there *must* be two of something or other which for one reason or another we cannot count on our fingers.

The trouble is that sometimes we *can* do so; we are very often obliged to do so, and it comes out correct. But we must not trust any such theorem; it is little more than a hint to help us in our guesses. Example: an angel appears and tells us that his name is MALIEL (MLIAL) which adds to 111, the third of the numbers of the Sun. Do we conclude that his nature is solar? In this case, yes, perhaps, because, (on the theory) he took that name for the very reason that it chimed with his nature. But a man may reside at 81 Silver Street without being a lunatic, or be born at five o'clock on the 5th of May, 1905, and make a very poor soldier.

“No, no, my dear sister, how tempted soever,
To nominalism be faithful forever!”

(If you want to be very learned indeed, read up Bertrand Russell on “Classes.”)

Enough, more than enough, of this: let us return to the relative value of various types of thought.

I think you already understand the main point: you must structuralise your thinking. You must learn how to differentiate and how to integrate your thoughts. Nothing exists in isolation; it is always conditioned by its relations with other things; indeed, in one sense, a thing is no more than the sum of these relations. (For the only “reality,” in the long run, is, as we have seen, a Point of View.)

Now, this task of organizing the mind, of erecting a coherent and intelligible structure, is enormously facilitated by the Qabalah.

When, in one of those curious fits of indisposition of which you periodically complain, and of which the cause appears to you so obscure, you see pink leopards on the staircase, mmmmm “Ah! the colour of the King Scale of Tiphareth—Oh! the form of Leo, probably in the Queen Scale” and thereby increase your vocabulary by these two items. Then, perhaps, someone suggests that indiscretion in the worship of Dionysus is responsible for the observed phenomena—well, there's Tiphareth again at once; the Priest, moreover, wears a leopard-skin, and the spots suggest the Sun. Also, Sol is Lord of Leo: so there you are! pink leopards are exactly what you have a right to expect!

Until you have practiced this method, all day and every day, for quite a long while, you cannot tell how amazingly your mnemonic power increases by virtue thereof. But be careful always to range the new ideas as they come along in their right order of importance.

It is not unlike the system of keys used in big establishments, such as hotels. First, a set of keys, each of which opens one door, and one door only. Then, a set which opens all the doors on one floor only. And so on, until the one responsible person who has one unique key which opens every lock in the building.

There is another point about this while System of the Qabalah. It does more than merely increase the mnemonic faculty by 10,000% or so; the habit of throwing your thoughts about, manipulating them, giving them a wash and brush-up, packing them away into their proper places in you “Crystal Cabinet,” gives you immensely increased power over them.

In particular, it helps you to rid them of the emotional dirt which normally clogs them;* you become perfectly indifferent to any implication but their value in respect of the whole system; and this is of incalculable help in the acquisition of new ides. It is the difference between a man trying to pick a smut out of his wife's eye with clumsy, greasy fingers coarsened by digging drains, and an oculist furnished with a speculum and all the instruments exactly suited to the task.

Yet another point. Besides getting rid of the emotions and sensations which cloud the thought, the fact that you are constantly asking your- self “Now, in which drawer of which cabinet does this thought go?” automatically induces you to regard the system as the important factor in the operation, if only because it is common to every one of them.

So not only have you freed Sanna (perception) from the taint of Vedana (sensation) but raised it (or demolished it, if your prefer to look at it in that light!) to be merely a member of the Sankhâra (tendency) class, thus boosting you vigorously to the fourth stage, the last before the last! of the practice of Mahasatipathana.

Just one more word about the element of Vedana. The Intellect is a purely mechanical contrivance, as accurate and as careless of what it turns out as a Cash Register. It receives impressions, calculates, states the result: that is A double L, ALL!

Try never to qualify a thought in any way, to see it as it is in itself in relation to those other elements which are necessary to make it what it is.

Above all, do not "mix the planes." A dagger may be sharp or blunt, straight or crooked; it is not "wicked-looking," or even "trusty," except in so far as the quality of its steel makes it so. A cliff is not "frowning" or "menacing." A snow-covered glacier is not "treacherous:" to say so means only that Alpine Clubmen and other persons ignorant of mountain craft are unable to detect the position of covered crevasses.

All such points you must decide for yourself; the important thing is that you should *challenge* any such ideas.

Above all, do not avoid, or slur, unwelcome trains of thought or distressing problems. Don't say "he passed on" when you mean "he died," and don't call a spade a bloody shovel!

Thresh out such matters with Osiris' flail; on the winnowing-fan of Iacchus!

Truth in itself is beautiful, and the best bower-anchor of your ship; every truth fits all the rest of truth; and the most alluring lies will never do that.

"The toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in its head."

and the result of letting

"Two ghastly scullions concoct mess
With brimstone, pitch, vitriol, and devil's dung."

in the end repay investigation.

The vision and the Voice again, please! That frightful Curse—how every phrase turns out to be a Blessing!**6**

I shall break off this brief note at this point, so that you may have time to tell me if what I have so far said covers the whole ground of your enquiry.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

* I hope there is no need to repeat that whether any given thought is pleasant, or undesirable, or otherwise soiled by Vedana, is *totally* irrelevant.

1: Annie Besant, theosophist.

2: R. Swinburne Clymer, founder of an American "Rosicrucian" group. He had denounced Crowley and the O.T.O. in print in his "Rosicrucian Fraternity in America", a work largely devoted to attacking H. Spencer Lewis and AMORC (*q.v. infra*) – T.S.

3: Max Heindel (1865-1919); born in Denmark, briefly involved in Theosophy; emigrated to the USA and founded the "Rosicrucian Fellowship" using material plagiarised from Rudolph Steiner – T.S.

4: Order of Hidden Masters; minor English occult fraternity operating about this time. I have little information on them – T.S.

5: Ancient and Mystical Order Rosae Crucis. Mail-order "Rosicrucian" fraternity founded by H. Spencer Lewis (1883-1939). Lewis had some kind of charter or "Gauge of Amity" from Theodor Reuss of O.T.O., and certain of his teachings were plagiarised from Crowley – T.S.

6: See in particular the ninth and second Æthyrs; the reference is to the Call of the Thirty Æthyrs – T.S.

Chapter 12

The Left-Hand Path—"The Black Brothers"

fCara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

It is the introduction of the word "self" that has raised such prickly questions. It really is a little bewildering; the signpost "Right-hand Path", "Left-hand Path", seems rather indecipherable; and then, for such a long way, they look exactly alike. At what point do they diverge?

Actually, the answers are fairly simple.

As far as the achievement or attainment is concerned, the two Paths are in fact identical. In fact, one almost feels obliged to postulate some inmost falsity, completely impossible to detect, inherent at the very earliest stages.

For the decision which determines the catastrophe confronts only the Adeptus Exemptus $7^\circ = 4^\square$. Until that grade is reached, and that very fully indeed, with all the buttons properly sewed on, one is not capable of understanding what is meant by the Abyss. Unless "all you have and all you are" is identical with the Universe, its annihilation would leave a surplus.

Mark well this first distinction: the "Black Magician" or Sorcerer is hardly even a distant cousin of the "Black Brother." The difference between a sneak-thief and a Hitler is not too bad an analogy.

The Sorcerer may be—indeed he usually is—a thwarted disappointed man whose aims are perfectly natural. Often enough, his real trouble is ignorance; and by the time he has become fairly hot stuff as a Black Magician, he has learnt that he is getting nowhere, and finds himself, despite himself, on the True Path of the Wise.

"Invoking Zeus to swell the power of Pan,

The prayer discomfits the demented man;

Lust lies as still as Love."

Thereupon he casts away his warlock apparatus like a good little boy, finds the A∴A∴, and lives happily ever after.

The Left-hand Path is a totally different matter. Let us start at the beginning.

You remember my saying that only two operations were possible in Nature: addition and subtraction. Let us apply this to magical progress.

What happens when the Aspirant invokes Diana, or calls up Lilith? He increases the sum of his experiences in these particular ways. Sometimes he has a "liaison-experience," which links two main lines of thought, and so is worth dozens of isolated gains.

Now, if there is any difference at all between the White and the Black Adept in similar case, it is that the one, working by "love under will" achieves a marriage with the new idea, while the other, merely grabbing, adds a concubine to his harem of slaves.

The about-to-be-Black Brother constantly restricts himself; he is satisfied with a very limited ideal; he is afraid of losing his individuality—reminds one of the "Nordic" twaddle about "race-pollution."

Have you seen the sand-roses of the Sahara? Such is the violence of the Khamsin that it whips grains of sand together, presses them, finally builds them into great blocks, big enough and solid enough to be used for walls in the oasis. And beautiful! Whew! For all that, they are not real rocks. Leave hem in peace, with no possible interference—what happens? (I brought some home, and put them "in safety" as curiosities, and as useful psychometrical tests.) Alas! Time is enough. Go to the drawer which held them; nothing remains but little piles of dust.

"Now Master!" (What reproach in the tone of your voice!) All right, all right! Keep your hair on!—I know that is the precise term used in *The Vision and the Voice*, to describe the Great White Brother or the Babe of the Abyss; but to him it means victory; to the Left-Hander it would mean defeat, ruin devastating, irremediable, final. It is exactly that which he most dreads; and it is that to which he must in the end come, because there is no compensating element in his idea of structure. Nations themselves never grow permanently by smash-and-grab

methods; one merely acquires a sore spot, as in the case of Lorraine, perhaps even Eire. (Though Eire is using just that formula of Restriction, shutting herself up in her misery and poverty and idiot pride, when a real marriage with and dissolution in, a real live country would give her new life. The "melting-pot" idea is the great strength of America.)

Consider the Faubourg St. Germain aristocracy—now hardly even a sentimental memory. The guillotine did not kill them; it was their own refusal to adapt themselves to the new biological conditions of political life. It was indeed their restriction that rotted them in the first instance; had Lafayette or Mirabeau been trusted with full power, and supplied with adequate material, a younger generation of virtue, the monarchy might still be ruling France.

But then (you ask) how can a man go so far wrong after he has, as an Adeptus Minor, attained the "Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel"?

Recall the passage in the 14th Aethyr "See where thine Angel hath led Thee", and so on. Perhaps the Black Brother deserts his Angel when he realises the Programme.

Perhaps his error was so deeply rooted, from the very beginning, that it was his Evil Genius that he evoked.

In such cases the man's policy is of course to break off all relations with the Supernal Triad, and to replace it by inventing a false crown, Daäth. To them Knowledge will be everything, and what is Knowledge but the very soul of Illusion?

Refusing thus the true nourishment of all his faculties, they lose their structural unity, and must be fortified by continuous doses of dope in anguished self-preservation. Thus all its chemical equations become endothermic.

I do hope I am making myself clear; it is a dreadfully subtle line of thought. But I think you ought to be able to pick up the essential theorem; your own meditations, aided by the relevant passages in *Liber 418* and elsewhere, should do the rest.

To describe the alternative attitude should clarify, by dint of contrast; at least the contemplation should be a pleasant change.

Every accretion must modify me. I want it to do so. I want to assimilate it absolutely. I want to make it a permanent feature of my Temple. I am not afraid of losing myself to it, if only because it also is modified by myself in the act of union.

I am not afraid of its being the "wrong" thing, because *every* experience is a "play of Nuit," and the worst that can happen is a temporary loss of balance, which is instantly adjusted, as soon as it is noticed, by recalling and putting into action the formula of contradiction.

Remember the *Fama Fraternitatis*: when they opened the Vault which held the Pastos of our Father Christian Rosencreuz, "all these colours were brilliant and flashing." That is, if one panel measured 10" x 40", the symbol (say, yellow) would occupy 200 square inches, and the background (in that case, violet) the other 200 square inches. Hence they *dazzled*; the limitation, restriction, demarcation, disappeared; and the result was an equable idea of form and colour which is beyond physical understanding. (At one time Picasso tried to work out this idea on canvas.) Destroy that equilibrium by one ten millionth of an inch, and the effect is lost. The unbalanced item stands out like a civilian in the middle of a regiment.

True, this faculty, this *feeling* for equilibrium must be acquired; but once you have done so, it is an unerring guide. Instant discomfort warns one; the impulse to scratch it (the analogy is too apt to reject!) is irresistible.

And oh! how imperative this is!

Unless your Universe is perfect—and perfection *includes* the idea of balance—how can you come even to Atmadarshana? Hindus may maintain that Atmadarshana, or at any rate Shivadarshana, is the equivalent of crossing the Abyss. Beware of any such conclusions! The Trances are simply isolated experiences, sharply cut off from normal thought-life. To cross the Abyss is a permanent and fundamental revolution in the whole of one's being.

Much more, upon the brink of the Abyss. If there be missing or redundant even one atom, the entire monstrous, the portentous mass must tend to move with irresistible impact, in such direction as to restore the equilibrium. To deflect it—well, think of a gyroscope! How then can you destroy it in one sole stupendous gesture? Ah! Listen to *The Vision and the Voice*.

Perhaps the best and simplest plan is for me to pick out the most important of the relevant passages and put them together as an appendix to this letter. Also, by contrast, those allusions to the "Black Brothers" and the "Left-hand Path." This ought to give you a clear idea of what each is, and does; of what distinguishes their respective methods in some ways so confusingly alike. I hope indeed most sincerely that you will whet your Magical Dagger on the Stone of the Wise, and

wield most deftly and determinedly both the White-handled and the Black-handled Burin. In trying to express these opinions, I am constantly haunted by the dread that I may be missing some crucial point, or even allowing a mere quibble to pass for argument. It makes it only all the worse when one has become so habituated by Neschamic ideas, to knowing, even before one says it, that what one is going to say is of necessity untrue, as untrue as it is contradictory. So what can it possibly matter what one says?

Such doubts are dampers!

"Enough of Because! Be he damned for a dog!"

Here follow the quotations from *The Vision and the Voice*.

The Angel re-appears

The blackness gathers about, so thick, so clinging, so penetrating, so oppressive, that all the other darkness that I have ever conceived would be like bright light beside it.

His voice comes in a whisper: O thou that art master of the fifty gates of Understanding, is not my mother a black woman? O thou that art master of the Pentagram, is not the egg of spirit a black egg? Here abideth terror, and the blind ache of the Soul, and lo! even I, who am the sole light, a spark shut up, stand in the sign of Apophis and Typhon.

I am the snake that devoureth the spirit of man with the lust of light. I am the sightless storm in the night that wrappeth the world about with desolation. Chaos is my name, and thick darkness. Know thou that the darkness of the earth is ruddy, and the darkness of the air is grey, but the darkness of the soul is utter blackness.

The egg of the spirit is a basilisk egg, and the gates of the understanding are fifty, that is the sign of the Scorpion. The pillars about the Neophyte are crowned with flame, and the vault of the Adepts is lighted by the Rose. And in the abyss is the eye of the hawk. But upon the great sea shall the Master of the Temple find neither star nor moon.

And I was about to answer him: "The light is within me." But before I could frame the words, he answered me with the great word that is the Key of the Abyss. And he said: Thou hast entered the night; dost thou yet lust for day? Sorrow is my name and affliction. I am girt about with tribulation. Here still hangs the Crucified One, and here the Mother weeps over the children that she hath not borne. Sterility is my

name and desolation. Intolerable is thine ache, and incurable thy wound. I said, 'Let the darkness cover me;' and behold, I am compassed about with the blackness that hath no name. O thou, who hast cast down the light into the earth, so must thou do for ever. And the light of the sun shall not shine upon thee and the moon shall not lend thee of her luster, and the stars shall be hidden because thou art passed beyond these things, beyond the need of these things, beyond the desire of these things.

What I thought were shapes of rocks, rather felt than seen, now appear to be veiled Masters, sitting absolutely still and silent. Nor can any one be distinguished from the others.

And the Angel sayeth: Behold where thine Angel hath led thee! Thou didst ask fame, power and pleasure, health and wealth and love, and strength and length of days. Thou didst hold life with eight tentacles, like an octopus. Thou didst seek the four powers and the seven delights and the twelve emancipations, and the two and twenty Privileges and the nine and forty Manifestations, and lo! thou art become as one of These. Bowed are their backs, whereon resteth the Universe. Veiled are their faces, that have beheld the glory Ineffable.

These adepts seem like Pyramids—their hoods and robes are like Pyramids.

And the Angel sayeth: Verily is the Pyramid a Temple of Initiation. Verily also is it a tomb. Thinkest thou that there is life within the Masters of the Temple that sit hooded, encamped upon the Sea? Verily, there is no life in them.

Their sandals were the pure light, and they have taken them from their feet and cast them down through the abyss; for this Aethyr is holy ground.

Herein no forms appear, and the vision of God face to face, that is transmuted in the Athanor called dissolution, or hammered into one in the forge of meditation, is in this place but a blasphemy and a mockery.

And the Beatific Vision is no more, and the glory of the Most High is no more. There is no more knowledge. There is no more bliss. There is no more power. There is no more beauty. For this is the Palace of Understanding; for thou art one with the Primeval things.

Drink in the myrrh of my speech, that is bruised with the gall of the roc, and dissolved in the ink of the cuttle-fish, and perfumed with the deadly nightshade.

This is thy wine, who wast drunk upon the wine of Iacchus. And for bread shalt thou eat salt, O thou on the corn of Ceres that didst wax fat! For as pure being is

pure nothing, so is pure wisdom pure ——*, and so is pure understanding silence, and stillness, and darkness. The eye is called seventy, and the triple Aleph whereby thou perceivest it, divideth into the number of the terrible word that is the Key of the Abyss.

I am Hermes, that am sent from the Father to expound all things discreetly in these the last words that thou shalt hear before thou take thy seat among these, whose eyes are sealed up and whose ears are stopped, and whose mouths are clenched, who are folded in upon themselves, the liquor of whose bodies is dried up, so that nothing remains but a little pyramid of dust.

And that bright light of comfort, and that piercing sword of truth, and all the power and beauty that they have made of themselves, is cast from them, as it is written, "I saw Satan like lightning fall from heaven." And as a flaming sword is it dropt though the Abyss, where the four beasts keep watch and ward. And it appeareth in the heaven of Jupiter as a morning star, or as an evening star. And the light thereof shineth even unto the earth, and bringeth hope and help to them that dwell in the darkness of thought, and drink of the poison of life. Fifty are the gates of Understanding, and one hundred and six are the seasons thereof. And the name of every season is Death.

(*The Vision and the Voice*. 14th Æthyr.)

And for his Work thereafter?

So we enter the earth, and there is a veiled figure, in absolute darkness. Yet it is perfectly possible to see in it, so that the minutest details do not escape us. And upon the root of one flower he pours acid so that the root writhes as if in torture. And another he cuts, and the shriek is like the shriek of a Mandrake, torn up by the roots. And another he sears with fire, and yet another he anoints with oil.

And I said: Heavy is the labour, but great indeed is the reward.

And the young man answered me: He shall not see the reward; he tendeth the garden.

And I said: What shall come unto him?

And he said: This thou canst not know, nor is it revealed by the letters that are the totems of the stars, but only by the stars.

And he says to me, quite disconnectedly: The man of earth is the adherent. The lover giveth his life unto the work among men. The hermit goeth solitary, and giveth only of his light unto men.

And I ask him: Why does he tell me that?

And he says: I tell thee not. Thou tellest thyself, for thou hast pondered thereupon for many days, and hast not found light. And now that thou art called NEMO, the answer to every riddle that thou hast not found shall spring up in thy mind, unsought. Who can tell upon what day a flower shall bloom?

And thou shalt give thy wisdom unto the world, and that shall be thy garden. And concerning time and death, thou hast naught to do with these things. For though a precious stone be hidden in the sand of the desert, it shall not heed for the wind of the desert, although it be but sand. For the worker of works hath worked thereupon; and because it is clear, it is invisible; and because it is hard, it moveth not.

All these words are heard by everyone that is called NEMO. And with that doth he apply himself to understanding. And he must understand the virtue of the waters of death, and he must understand the virtue of the sun and of the wind, and of the worm that turneth the earth, and of the stars that roof in the garden. And he must understand the separate nature and property of every flower, or how shall he tend his garden?

(*Ibid*. 13th Æthyr.)

Thus for the Masters of the Temple; for the Black Brothers, how?

For Choronzon is as it were the shell or excrement of these three paths, and therefore is his head raised unto Daäth, and therefore have the Black Brotherhood declared him to be the child of Wisdom and Understanding, who is but the bastard of the Svastika. And this is that which is written in the Holy Qabalah, concerning the Whirlpool and Leviathan, and the Great Stone.

(*Ibid*. 3rd Æthyr)

Moreover, there is Mary, a blasphemy against BABALON, for she hath shut herself up; and therefore is she the Queen of all those wicked devils that walk upon the earth, those that thou sawest even as little black specks that stained the Heaven of Urania. And all these are the excrement of Choronzon.

And for this is BABALON under the power of the Magician, that she hath submitted herself unto the work; and she guardeth the Abyss. And in her is a perfect purity of that which is above, yet she is sent as the Redeemer to them that are below. For there is no other way into the Supernal mystery but through her and the Beast on which she rideth; and the Magician is set beyond her to deceive the brothers of blackness, lest they should make unto themselves a crown; for it there were two crowns, then should Ygdrasil, that ancient tree, be cast out into the Abyss, uprooted and cast down into the Outermost Abyss, and the Arcanum which is in the Adytum should be profaned; and the Ark should be touched, and the Lodge spied upon by them that are not masters, and the bread of the Sacrament should be the dung of Choronzon; and the wine of the Sacrament should be the water of Choronzon; and the incense should be dispersion; and the fire upon the Altar should be hate. But lift up thyself; stand, play the man, for behold! there shall be revealed unto thee the Great Terror, the thing of awe that hath no name.

(*Ibid*. 3rd Æthyr)

And now She cometh forth again, riding upon a dolphin. Now again I see those wandering souls, that have sought restricted love, and have not understood that the "word of sin is restriction."

It is very curious; they seem to be looking for one another, or for something, all the time, constantly hurrying about. But they knock up against one another and yet will not see one another, or cannot see one another, because they are so shut up in their cloaks.

And a voice sounds: It is most terrible for the one that hath shut himself up and made himself fast against the universe. For they that sit encamped upon the sea in the city of the Pyramids are indeed shut up. But they have given their blood, even to the last drop, to fill the cup of BABALON.

These that thou seest are indeed the Black Brothers, for it is written: He shall laugh

at their calamity and mock when their fear cometh. And therefore hath he exalted them unto the plane of love.

And yet again it is written: He desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his wickedness. Now, if one of these were to cast off his cloak he should behold the brilliance of the lady of the Aethyr; but they will not.

And again:—

Oh, I see vast plains beneath her feet, enormous deserts studded with great rocks; and I see little lonely souls, running helplessly about, minute black creatures like men. And they keep up a very curious howling, that I can compare to nothing that I have ever heard; yet it is strangely human.

And the voice says: These are they that grasped love and clung thereto, praying ever at the knees of the great goddess. These are they that have shut themselves up in fortresses of Love.

(Ibid. 7th Æthyr.)

Moreover, this also:

And this is the meaning of the Supper of the Passover, the spilling of the blood of the Lamb being a ritual of the Dark Brothers, for they have sealed up the Pylon with blood, lest the Angel of Death should enter therein. Thus do they shut themselves off from the company of the saints. Thus do they keep themselves from compassion and from understanding. Accursed are they, for they shut up their blood in their heart.

They keep themselves from the kisses of my Mother Babylon, and in their lonely fortresses they pray to the false moon. And they bind themselves together with an oath, and with a great curse. And of their malice they conspire together, and they have power, and mastery, and in their cauldrons do they brew the harsh wine of delusion, mingled with the poison of their selfishness.

Thus they make war upon the Holy one, sending forth their delusion upon men, and upon everything that liveth. So that their false compassion is called compassion, and their false understanding is called understanding, for this is their most potent spell.

Yet of their own poison do they perish, and in their lonely fortresses shall they be eaten up by Time that hath cheated them to serve him, and by the mighty devil Choronzon, their master, whose name is the second Death, for the blood that they have sprinkled on their Pylon, that is a bar against the Angel Death, is the key by which he entereth in.†

(*Ibid*. 12th Æthyr.)

Finally:

Yet must he that understandeth go forth unto the outermost Abyss, and there must he speak with him that is set above the four-fold terror, the Prince of Evil, even with Choronzon, the mighty devil that inhabiteth the outermost Abyss. And none may speak with him, or understand him, but the servants of Babylon, that understand, and they that are without understanding, his servants.

Behold! it entereth not into the heart, nor into the mind of man to conceive this matter; for the sickness of the body is death, and the sickness of the heart is despair, and the sickness of the mind is madness. But in the outermost Abyss is sickness of the aspiration, and sickness of the will, and sickness of the essence of all, and there is neither word nor thought wherein the image of its image is reflected.

And whoso passeth into the outermost Abyss, except he be of them that understand, holdeth out his hands, and boweth his neck, unto the Chains of Choronzon. And as a devil he walketh about the earth, immortal, and be blasteth the flowers of the earth, and he corrupteth the fresh air, and he maketh poisonous the water; and the fire that is the friend of man, and the pledge of his aspiration, seeing that it mounteth ever up- ward as a Pyramid, and seeing that man stole it in a hollow tube from Heaven, even that fire he turneth into ruin, and madness, and fever, and destruction. And thou, that art an heap of dry dust in the city of the Pyramids, must understand these things.

Beware, therefore, O thou who art appointed to understand the secret of the Outermost Abyss, for in every Abyss thou must assume the mask and form of the Angel thereof. Hadst thou a name, thou wert irrevocably lost. Search, therefore, if there be yet one drop of blood that is not gathered into the cup of Babylon the

Beautiful: for in that little pile of dust, if there could be one drop of blood, it should be utterly corrupt; it should breed scorpions, and vipers, and the cat of slime.

And I said unto the Angel: “Is there not one appointed as a warden?”

And he said:

Eloi, Eloi, lama sabacthani.

Such an ecstasy of anguish racks me that I cannot give it voice, yet I know it is but as the anguish of Gethsemane.

(Ibid. 7th Æthyr.)

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

* I suppose that only a Magus could have heard this word.

† (I think the trouble with these people was, that they wanted to substitute the blood of someone else for their own blood, because they wanted to keep their personalities.)

Chapter 13

System of the O.T.O.

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

You inform me that the Earnest Inquirer of your ambit has been asking you to explain the difference between the A∴A∴ and the O.T.O.; and that although your own mind is perfectly clear about it, you find it impossible to induce a similar lucidity in his. You add that he is not (as one might at first suppose) a moron. And will I please do what I can about it?

Well, here's the essential difference *ab ovo usque ad mala*; the A∴A∴ concerns the individual, his development, his initiation, his passage from "Student" to "Ipsissimus"; he has no contact of any kind with any other person except the Neophyte who introduces him, and any Student or Students whom he may, after becoming a Neophyte, introduce.

The details of this *Pilgrim's Progress* are very fully set forth in *One Star in Sight*; and I should indeed be stupid and presumptuous to try to do better than that. But it is true that with regard to the O.T.O. there is no similar manual of instruction. In the Manifesto, and other Official Pronunciamenti, there are, it is true, what ought to be adequate data; but I quite understand that they are not as ordered and classified as one would wish; there is certainly room for a simple elementary account of the origins of the Order, of its principles, of its methods, of its design, of the Virtue of its successive Grades. This I will now try to supply, at least in a brief outline.

Let us begin at the beginning. What is a Dramatic Ritual? It is a celebration of the Adventures of the God whom it is intended to invoke. (The *Bacchae* of Euripides is a perfect example of this.) Now, in the O.T.O., the object of the ceremonies being the Initiation of the Candidate, it is he whose Path in Eternity is displayed in dramatic form.

What is the Path?

1. The Ego is attracted to the Solar System.
2. The Child experiences Birth.
3. The Man experiences Life.
4. He experiences Death.
5. He experiences the World beyond Death.
6. This entire cycle of Point-Events is withdrawn into Annihilation.

In the O.T.O. these successive stages are represented as follows:—

1	0°	(Minerval)
2	I°	(Initiation)
3	II°	(Consecration)
4	III°	(Devotion)
5	IV°	(Perfection, or Exaltation)
6	P.I.	(Perfect Initiate)

Of these Events of Stations upon the Path all but 3 (II°) are single critical experiences. We, however, are concerned mostly with the very varied experiences of Life.

All subsequent Degrees of the O.T.O. are accordingly elaborations of the II°, since in a single ceremony it is hardly possible to sketch, even in the briefest outline, the Teaching of Initiates with regard to Life. The Rituals V°–IX° are then instructions to the Candidate how he should conduct himself; and they confer upon him, gradually, the Magical Secrets which make him Master of Life.

It is improper to disclose the nature of these ceremonies; firstly, because their Initiates are bound by the strictest vows not to do so; secondly, because surprise is an element in their efficacy; and thirdly, because the Magical Formulae explicitly or implicitly contained therein are, from a practical point of view, both powerful and dangerous. Automatic safeguards there are, it is true; but a Black Magician of

first-class ability might find a way to overcome these obstacles, and work great mischief upon others before the inevitable recoil of his artillery destroys him.

Such cases I have known. Let me recount briefly one rather conspicuous disaster. The young man was a genius—and it was his bane. He got hold of a talisman of enormous power which happened to be exactly what he wanted to fulfill his heart's dearest wish. He knew also the correct way of getting it to work; but this way seemed to him far too long and difficult. So he cast about for a short cut. By using actual violence to the talisman, he saw how he could force it to carry out his design; he used a formula entirely alien to the spirit of the whole operation; it was rather like extracting information from a prisoner by torture, when patient courtesy would have been the proper method. So he crashed the gate and got what he wanted. But the nectar turned to poison even as he drained the cup, and his previous anguish developed into absolute despair. Then came the return of the current, and they brought it in "while of unsound mind." A most accurate diagnosis!

I do beg you to mark well, dear sister, that a true Magical Operation is never "against Nature." It must go smoothly and serenely according to Her laws. One can bring in alien energies and compel an endothermic reaction; but—"Pike's Peak or bust?" The answer will always be BUST!

To return for a moment to that question of Secrecy: there is no rule to prohibit you from quoting against me such of my brighter remarks as "Mystery is the enemy of Truth;" but, for one thing, I am, and always have been, the leader of the Extreme Left in the Council-Chamber of the City of the Pyramids, so that if I acquiesce at all in the system of the O.T.O. so far as the "secret of secrets" of the IX° is concerned, it is really on a point of personal honour. My pledge given to the late Frater Superior and O.H.O., Dr. Theodor Reuss. For all that, in this particular instance it is beyond question a point of common prudence, both because the abuse of the Secret is, at least on the surface, so easy and so tempting, and because, if it became a matter of general knowledge the Order itself might be in danger of calumny and persecution; for the secret is even easier to misinterpret than to profane.

Lege! Judica! Tace![1)]

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

1) Lat., “Read! Judge! Be silent!”

Chapter 14

Noise

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

You ask me what is, at the present time, the greatest obstacle to human progress.

I answer in one word: NOISE.

You will recall that in Yoga the concise compendium of Initiated Instruction is:

Sit still
Stop thinking
Shut up, and
Get out.

The second of these postulates the third; for one can neither think nor stop thinking with all that row going on.

Then again, the Fourth Power of the Sphinx is Silence; on this subject I must refer you to Little Essays Toward Truth (No. 14, p. 75).

We are really trying to discuss something totally different; something practical in daily life. Very well, then; you remark that Goetia actually means "howling", that we use officially the Bell, the Tom-Tom, the Incantations, the Mantras and so on. All quite true, about Magick; but none of it applies to Yoga, for even with the Mantra the practice is to go faster and more quietly as one proceeds, until it becomes "Mental Muttering." *M* is the letter that is pronounced with the lips firmly closed; and Silence is the meaning of the MU root of Mystery.

However, we must admit the value of rhythmical, one-pointed sound; that is very different from Noise. Old French has *noise, nose*, a debate, quarrel, noise; Provençal *noisa*, *nausa*, *nueiza*. But Diez claims the derivation from *nausea*—and by the Living Jingo, I consider Diez a hundred per cent white man!

Now, most modern talking is little better than a series of conventional grunts; most people seem to aim deliberately at not saying anything with meaning, at least in normal conversation. (James Branch Cabell is exceedingly funny in his displays of this intolerable habit.)

I once had a most wholesome lesson: how diffuse and therefore unnecessary is much of even our most would-be-compressed speech.

I had been charged by my Superior with the reconstruction of a certain ritual.[1)] This was in 1912; already the tempo of the world had speeded up mercilessly; to get people to learn even short passages by heart would be no easy job. So, warned by the prolix, pious, priggish and platitudinous horrors of Freemasonry (especially the advanced degrees of the Scottish and Egyptian Rites), I resolved to cut the cackle and come to the 'osses in the most drastic manner of which I was capable.

It was a great success.

But then we had a candidate who was stone deaf. (Not “a little hard of hearing;” his tympana were burst.)

Obviously, one could show him slips of paper, as one did in talking to him. But there in much of the ceremony the candidate must be hoodwinked!

Nothing for it but to communicate by the deaf and dumb alphabet on his fingers. This I did—and found that I could cut out on the spur of the moment at least forty per cent of the “Irreducible minimum” without doing any damage at all to the effect of the ritual. “That larned 'im!”

Of course, there is such a thing as the Art of Conversation; I have been lucky enough to know three, perhaps four, of the world's best talkers; but that is not to the point. As well object to impasto because it wastes paint.

What I am out to complain of is what I seriously believe to be an organized conspiracy of the Black Lodges to prevent people from thinking.

Naked and unashamed! In some countries there has already been compulsory listening-in to Government programmes; and who knows how long it will be before we are all subjected by law to the bleatings, bellowings, belchings of the boring balderdash of the B.B.C.-issies?

They boast of the freedom of religious thought; yet only the narrowest sectarian propaganda is allowed to approach the microphone. I quite expect censorship of books—that of the newspapers, however vehemently denied, is actually effective—and even of private letters. This will mean an enormous increase in parasitic functionaries who can be trusted to vote for the rascals that invented their sinecures. That was, in fact, the poison ivy that strangled the French poplar!

But these soul-suffocating scoundrels know well their danger. There are still a few people about who have learnt to think; and they are palsied with terror lest, as might happen at any moment these people realized the peril, organized, and made a clean sweep of the whole brood of scolex!

So nobody must be allowed to think at all. Down with the public schools! Children must be drilled mentally by quarter-educated herdsmen, whose wages would stop at the first sign of disagreement with the bosses. For the rest, deafen the whole world with senseless clamour. Mechanize everything! Give nobody a chance to think. Standardize “amusement.” The louder and more cacophonous, the better! Brief intervals between one din and the next can be filled with appeals, repeated 'till hypnotic power gives them the force of orders, to buy this or that product of the “Business men” who are the real power in the State. Men who betray their country as obvious routine.

The history of the past thirty years is eloquent enough, one would think. What these sodden imbeciles never realize is that a living organism must adapt itself intelligently to its environment, or go under at the first serious change of circumstance.

Where would England be today if there had not been one man,[2)] deliberately kept “in the wilderness” for decades as “unsound,” “eccentric,” “dangerous,” “not to be trusted,” “impossible to work with,” to take over the country from the bewildered “safe” men?

And what could he have done unless the people had responded? Nothing. So then there is still a remnant whose independence, sense of reality, and manhood begin to count when the dear, good, woolly flock scatter in terror at the wolf's first howl.

Yes, they are there, and they can get us back our freedom—if only we can make them see that the enemy in Whitehall is more insidiously fatal than the foe in Brownshirt House.

On this note of hope I will back to my silence.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

1) Given the date the reference is almost certainly to the O.T.O. initiations – T.S.

2) Winston Churchill – W.E.H.

Chapter 15

Sex Morality

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Thank you! I am to cover the whole question of sex in a few well-chosen words? Am I to suppose that you want to borrow money? Such fulsome flattery suggests the indirect approach.

As a matter of fact, your proposal is not so outrageous as it sounds at first; for as far as the English language goes, there is really hardly anything worth reading. 98.138 per cent of it is what Frances Ridley Ravergal used to call "fiddlesticks, blah, boloney, Bull-shit, and the bunk."

However, quite recently I issued an Encyclical to the Faithful with the attractive title of Artemis Iota, and I propose that we read this into the record, to save trouble, and because it gives a list of practically all the classics that you ought to read. Also, it condenses information and advice to "beginners," with due reference to the positive injunctions given in The Book of the Law.

Still, for the purpose of these letters, I should like to put the whole matter in a nutshell. The Tree of Life, as usual, affords a convenient means of classification.

1. To the physical side of it psychological laws apply. "Don't monkey with the buzz-saw!" as John Wesley might have put it, though I doubt whether he did.
2. The "moral" side. As in the case of the voltage of a cissoid, there isn't one. Mind your own business! is the sole sufficient rule. To drag in social, economic, religious, and such aspects is irrelevance and impurity.
3. The Magical side. Sex is, directly or indirectly, the most powerful weapon in the armoury of the Magician; and precisely because there is no moral guide, it is indescribably dangerous. I have given a great many hints, especially in *Magick,* and *The Book of Thoth*—some of the cards are almost blatantly

> revealing; so I have been rapped rather severely over the knuckles for giving children matches for playthings. My excuse has been that they have already got the matches, that my explanations have been directed to add conscious precautions to the existing automatic safeguards.

The above remarks refer mainly to the technique of the business; and it is going a very long way to tell you that you ought to be able to work out the principles thereof from your general knowledge of Magick, but especially the Formula of Tetragrammaton, clearly stated and explained in *Magick*, Chap. III. Combine this with the heart of Chap. XII and you've got it!

But there is another point at issue. This incidentally, is where the "automatic safeguards" come in. "…thou hast no right but to do thy will." (AL I, 42) means that to "go anwhoring after strange" purposes can only be disastrous. It is possible, in chemistry, to provoke an endothermic reaction; but that is only asking for trouble. The product bears within its own heart the seed of dissolution. Accordingly, the most important preliminary to any Magical operation is to make sure that its object is not only harmonious with, but necessary to, your Great Work.

Note also that the use of this supreme method involves the manipulation of energies ineffably secret and most delicately sensitive; it compares with the operations of ordinary Magick as the last word in artillery does with the blunderbuss!

I ought to have mentioned the sexual instinct or impulse in itself, careless of magical or any other considerations soever: the thing that picks you up by the scruff of the neck, slits your weasand with a cavalry sabre, and chucks the remains over the nearest precipice.

What *is* the damn thing, anyway?

That's just the trouble; for it is the *first* of the masks upon the face of the True Will; and that mask is the Poker-Face!

As all true Art is spontaneous, is genius, is utterly beyond all conscious knowledge or control, so also is sex. Indeed, one might class it as deeper still than Art; for Art does at least endeavour to find an intelligible means of expression. That is much nearer to sanity than the blind lust of the sex-impulse. The maddest genius does look from Chokmah not only to Binah, but to the fruit of that union in Da'ath and the Ruach; the sex-impulse has no use for Binah to understand, to interpret, to transmit. It wants no more than an instrument which will destroy it.

“Here, I say, Master, have a heart!”

Nonsense! (I continue) What I say is the plain fact, and well you know it! More, damned up, hemmed in, twisted and tortured as it has been by religion and morality and all the rest of it, it has learnt to disguise itself, to appear in a myriad forms of psychosis, neurosis, actual insanity of the most dangerous types. You don't have to look beyond Hitler! Its power and its peril derive directly from the fatal fact that in itself it is the True Will in its purest form.

What then is the magical remedy? Obvious enough to the Qabalist. “Love is the law, love under will.” It must be fitted at its earliest manifestations with its proper Binah, so as to flow freely along the Path of Daleth, and restore the lost Balance. Attempts to suppress it are fatal, to sublime it are false and futile. But guided wisely from the start, by the time it becomes strong it has learnt how to use its virtues to the best advantage.

And what of the parallel instinct in a woman? Except in (rather rare) cases of congenital disease or deformity, the problem is never so acute.

For Binah, even while she winks a Chokmah, has the other eye wide-open, swivelled on Tiphareth. Her True Will is thus divided by Nature from the start, and her tragedy is if she fails to unite these two objects. Oh, dear me, yes, I know all about “*spretæ injuria formæ*” and “*furens quid femina possit*”; but that is only because when she misses her bite she feels doubly baffled, robbed not only of the ecstatic Present, but of the glamorous Future. If she eat independently of the Fruit of the Tree of Life when unripe, she has not only the bad taste in the mouth, but indigestion to follow. Then, living as she does so much in the world of imagination, constantly living shadow-pictures of her Desire, she is not nearly so liable to the violent insanities of sheer blind lust, as is the male. The essential difference is indicated by that of their respective orgasms, the female undulatory, the male catastrophic.

The above, taken all in all, may not be fully comprehensive, not wholly satisfying to the soul, but one thing with another, enough for a cow to chew the cud on.

Good night!

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

Note: In the paper edition of Magick Without Tears, the above letter was followed by Artemis Iota. As the latter document is already on this site in its entirety, it is here omitted – T.S.

Chapter 16

On Concentration

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

You wisely ask me for a special letter on Concentration; you point out that I have implied it constantly, but never given plain instruction.

It hope I have not been so vague as to allow you to suppose that Concentration Camps are evidence that benevolent and enlightened governments are at last seriously concerned to educate the world to Yoga; but I do agree that it cannot do great harm if I take a dose of my own medicine, and gather into one golden sheaf all the ripe corn of my wisdom on this subject.

For concentration does indeed unlock all doors; it lies at the heart of every practice as it is of the essence of all theory; and almost all the various rules and regulations are aimed at securing adeptship in this matter. All the subsidiary work—awareness, one-pointedness, mind- fullness and the rest—is intended to train you to this.

All the greetings, salutations, “Saying Will,” periodical adorations, even saying “apo pantos kakodaimonos” with a downward and outward sweep of the arm, the eyes averted, when one sees a person dressed in a religious (Christian) uniform: all these come under “Don't stroke the cat the wrong way!” or, in the modern pseudo-scientific journalese jargon “streamlining life.”

Let us see if Frater Perdurabo has anything to the point! Of course, Part I of *Book 4* is devoted to it; but there is too much, and not enough, to be useful to us just now.

What your really need is the official Instruction in *The Equinox,* and the very fullest and deepest understanding of *Eight Lectures on Yoga*; but these lectures are so infernally interesting that when I look into the book for something to quote, it carries me away with it. I can't put it down, I forget all about this letter. Rather a back-handed advertisement for Concentration!

The best way is the hardest; to forget all this and start from the beginning as if there had never been anything on the subject written before.

I must keep always in mind that you are assumed to know nothing whatever about Yoga and Magick, or anything else beyond what the average educated person may be assumed to have been taught.

What is the problem? There are two.

β: To train the mind to move with the maximum speed and energy, with the utmost possible accuracy in the chosen direction, and with the minimum of disturbance or friction. That is Magick.

α: To stop the mind altogether. That is Yoga.

The rules, strangely enough, are identical in both cases; at least, until your "Magick" is perfect; Yoga merely goes on a step further. In Beta you have reduced all movements from many to One; in Alpha you reduce that One to Zero.

Now then, with a sigh of relief, know you this: that every possible incident in the Beta training is *mutatis mutandis*, perfectly familiar to the engineer.

The material must be chosen and prepared in the kind and in the manner, best suited to the design of the intended machine; the various parts must be put together with the utmost precision; every obstacle to the function must be removed, and every source of error eliminated. Now cheer up, child! In the case of a machine that he has devised and constructed himself with every condition in his favour, he thinks he is doing not too badly if he gets some fifteen or twenty per cent of the calculated efficiency out of the instrument; and even Nature, with millions of years to adjust and improve, very often cannot boast of having done much better. So you have no reason to be discouraged if success does not smile upon you in the first week or so of your Work, starting as you do with material of whose properties you are miserably ignorant, with means pitifully limited, with Laws of Nature which you do not understand; in fact, with almost everything against you but indomitable Will and unconquerable courage.

(I know I'm a poor contemptible Lowbrow; but I refuse to be ashamed for finding Kipling's *If* and Henley's Don't remember-the title; they may not be poetry—but they are honest food and damned good beer for the plebeian wayfarer. It was such manhood, not the left-wing high-brow Bloomsbury sissies, that kept London through the blitz. Pray forgive the digression!)

There is only one method to adopt in such circumstances as those of the Aspirant to Magick and Yoga: the method of Science. Trial and error. You must *observe*. That implies, first of all, that you must learn to observe. And you must record your observations. No circumstance of life is, or can be irrelevant. "He that is not with me is against me." In all these letters you will find only two things: either I tell you what is bad for you, or what is good for you. But I am not you; I don't know every detail of your life, every trick of your thought. You must do ninety percent of the work for yourself. Whether it is love, or your daily avocation, or diet, or friends, or amusement, or anything else, you must find out what helps you to your True Will and what hinders; cherish the one and eschew the other.

I want to insist most earnestly that concentration is not, as we nearly all of us think, a matter of getting things right in the practices; you must make every breath you draw subservient to the True Will, to fertilize the soil for the practices. When you sit down in your Asana to quiet your mind, it is much easier for you if your whole life has tended to relative quietude; when you knock with your Wand to announce the opening of an Invocation, it is better if the purpose of that ceremony has been simmering in the background of your thought since childhood!

Yes indeed: background!

Deep down, on the very brink of the subconscious, are all those facts which have *determined* you to choose this your Great Work.

Then, the ambition, conscious, which arranges the general order and disposition of your life.

Lastly, the practices themselves. And my belief is that the immense majority of failures have their neglect to brush up their drill to thank for it.

For technical advice on all these subjects, I shall refer you to those official works mentioned in the early part of this letter; I shall be happy if you will take to heart what I am now so violently thrusting at you, this Middle Work of Concentration.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

Chapter 17

Astral Journey: Example, How to do it, How to Verify your Experience

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

There is no better way of training the memory than the practice of the Holy Qabalah.

The whole mechanism of memory depends on joining up independent data. You must go on adding a little to little, always joining the simple impressions by referring them to others which are more general; and so on until the whole of your universe is arranged like the brain and the nervous system. This system in fact, *becomes* the Universe. When you have got everything properly correlated, your central consciousness understands and controls every tiniest detail. But you must begin at the beginning—you go out for a walk, and the first thing you see is a car; that represents the Atu VII, the Chariot, referred to Cancer.

Then you come to a fishmonger, and notice certain crustacea, very mala chostomous. This comes under the same sign of Cancer. The next thing you notice is an amber-coloured dress in Swan and Edgar's; amber also is the colour of Cancer in the King's Scale. Now then you have a set of three impressions which is joined together by the fact that they all belong to the Cancer class; experience will soon teach that you can remember all three very much more clearly and accurately than you could any one of the three singly.

You have not increased the burden on your memory, but diminished it.

What you say about tension and eagerness and haste is very true. See The Book of the Law, Chapter I, 44.

“For pure will, unassuaged of purpose, delivered from the lust of result, is every way perfect.”

This, from a *practical* point of view, is one of the most important verses in the book.

The unusual word “unassuaged” is very interesting. People generally suppose that “will” is the slave of purpose, that you cannot will a thing properly unless you are aiming at a definite goal. But this is not the case. Thinking of the goal actually serves to distract the mind. In these few words is included the whole method without all the bombastic piety of the servile doctrine of mysticism about the surrender of the Will. Nor is this idea of surrender actually correct; the will must be identified with the Divine Will, so-called. One wants to become like a mighty flowing river, which is not consciously aiming at the sea, and is certainly not yielding to any external influence. It is acting in conformity with the law of its own nature, with the Tao. One can describe it, if necessary, as “passive love”; but it is love (in effect) raised to its highest potential. We come back to the same thing: when passion is purged of any “lust of result” it is irresistible; it has become “Law.” I can never understand why it is that mystics fail to see that their smarmy doctrine of surrender actually insists upon the duality which they have set out to abolish!

I certainly have no intention of “holding you down” to “a narrow path of work” or any path. All I can do is to help you to understand clearly the laws of your own nature, so that you may go ahead without extraneous influence. It does not follow that a plan that I have found successful in my own case will be any use to you. That is another cardinal mistake of most teachers. One must have become a Master of the Temple to annihilate one's ego. Most teachers, consciously or unconsciously, try to get others to follow in their steps. I might as well dress you up in my castoff clothing! (*In the steps of the Master*. *At the feet of the Master*. Steward!)

Please observe that the further you get on, the higher your potential, the greater is the tendency to leak, or even to break the containing vessel. I can help you by warning you against setting up obstacles, real or imaginary, in your own path; which is what most people do. It is almost laughable to think that the Great Work consists merely in “letting her rip;” but Karma bumps you from one side of the toboggan slide to the other, until you come into the straight.“ (There's a chapter or two in the *Book of Lies* about this, but I haven't got a copy. I must find one, and put them in here. Yes: p. 22)[1)]

O thou that settest out upon the Path, false is the Phantom that thou seekest. When thou hast it thou shalt know all bitterness, thy teeth fixed in the Sodom-Apple.

Thus hast thou been lured along that Path, whose terror else had driven thee far away.

O thou that stridest upon the middle of the Path, no phantoms mock thee. For the stride's sake thou stridest.

Thus art thou lured along that Path, whose fascination else had driven thee far away.

O thou that drawest toward the End of The Path, effort is no more. Faster and faster dost thou fall; thy weariness is changed into Ineffable Rest.

For there is no Thou upon that Path: thou hast become The Way.

As in the *Yi King*, the 3rd hexagram has departed from the original perfection, and it takes all the rest of the hexagrams to put things right again.

The result, it is true, is superior; the perfection of the original has been enhanced and enriched by its experience.

There is another way of defining the Great Work. That explains to us the whole object of manifestation, of departing from the perfection of "Nothing" towards the perfection of "everything", and one may consider this advantage, that it is quite impossible to go wrong. Every experience, whatever may be its nature, is just another necessary bump.

Naturally one cannot realize this until one becomes a Master of the Temple; consequently one is perpetually plunged in sorrow and despair. There is, you see, a good deal more to it than merely learning one's mistakes. One can never be sure what is right and what is wrong, until one appreciates that "wrong" is equally "right." Now then one gets rid of the idea of "effort" which is associated with "lust of result." All that one does is to exercise pleasantly and healthfully one's energies.

It will not do to regard "man" as the "final cause" of manifestation. Please do not quote myself against me.

"Man is so infinitely small,
In all these stars, determinate.
Maker and master of them all,
Man is so infinitely great."[2)]

The human apparatus is the best instrument of which we are, at present, aware in our normal consciousness; but when you come to experience the Conversation of the higher intelligences, you will understand how imperfect are your faculties. It is true that you can project these intelligences as parts of yourself, or you can suppose that certain human vehicles may be temporally employed by them for various purposes; but these speculations tend to be idle. The important thing is to make contact with beings, whatever their nature, who are superior to yourself, not merely in degree but it kind. That is to say, not merely different as a Great Dane differs from a Chihuahua, but as a buffalo differs from either.

Of course you are perfectly right about the senses, though I would not agree to confine the meaning to the five which are common to most people. There must, one might suspect, be ways of apprehending directly such phenomena as magnetism, electrical resistance, chemical affinity and the like. Let me direct you once more to *The Book of the Law*, Chapter II, vs. 70 - 72.

"There is help & hope in other spells. Wisdom says: be strong! Then canst thou bear more joy. Be not animal; refine thy rapture! If thou drink, drink by the eight and ninety rules of art: if thou love, exceed by delicacy; and if thou do aught joyous, let there be subtlety therein!

"But exceed! exceed!

"Strive ever to more! and if thou art truly mine—and doubt it not, an if thou art ever joyous!—death is the crown of all."

The mystic's idea of deliberately stupefying and stultifying himself is an "abomination unto the Lord." This, by the way, does not conflict with the rules of Yoga. That kind of suppression is comparable to the restrictions in athletic training, or diet in sickness.

Now we get back to the Qabalah—how to make use of it.

Let us suppose that you have been making an invocation, or shall we call it an investigation, and suppose you want to interpret a passage of Bach. To play this is the principal weapon of your ceremony. In the course of your operation, you assume your astral body and rise far above the terrestrial atmosphere, while the music continues softly in the background. You open your eyes, and find that it is night. Dark clouds are on the horizon; but in the zenith is a crown of constellations. This light helps you, especially as your eyes become accustomed to the gloom, to take in your surroundings. It is a bleak and barren landscape. Terrific mountains

rim the world. In the midst looms a cluster of blue-black crags. Now there appears from their recesses a gigantic being. His strength, especially in his hands and in his loins, it terrifying. He suggests a combination of lion, mountain goat and serpent; and you instantly jump to the idea that this is one of the rare beings which the Greeks called Chimaera. So formidable is his appearance that you consider it prudent to assume an appropriate god-form. But who is the appropriate god? You may perhaps consider it best, in view of your complete ignorance as to who he is and where you are, to assume the god-form of Harpocrates, as being good defence in any case; but of course this will not take you very far. If you are sufficiently curious and bold, you will make up your mind rapidly on this point. This is where your daily practice of the Qabalah will come in useful. You run through in your mind the seven sacred planets. The very first of them seems quite consonant with what you have so far seen. Everything suits Saturn well enough. To be on the safe side, you go through the others; but this is a very obvious case—Saturn is the only planet that agrees with everything. The only other possibility will be the Moon; but there is no trace noticeable of any of her more amiable characteristics. You will therefore make up your mind that it is a Saturnian god-form that you need. Fortunate indeed for you that you have practiced daily the assumption of such forms! Very firmly, very steadily, very slowly, very quietly, you transform your normal astral appearance into that of Sebek. The Chimaera, recognizing your divine authority, becomes less formidable and menacing in appearance. He may, in some way, indicate his willingness to serve you. Very good, so far; but it is of course the first essential to make sure of his integrity. Accordingly you begin by asking his name. This is vital; because if he tells you the truth, it gives you power over him. But if, on the other hand, he tells you a lie, he abandons for good and all his fortress. He becomes rather like a submarine whose base has been destroyed. He may do you a lot of mischief in the meantime, of course, so look out!

Well then, he tells you that his name is Ottillia. Shall we try to spell it in Greek or in Hebrew. By the sound of the name and perhaps to some extent by his appearance one might plump for the former; but after all the Greek Qabalah is so unsatisfactory. We give Hebrew the first chance—we start with Ayin Teth Yod Lamed Yod Aleph Hé. Let us try this lettering for a start. It adds up to 135. I daresay that you don't remember what the *Sepher Sephiroth* tells you about the number; but as luck will have it, there is no need to inquire; for 135 = 3 x 45. Three is the number, is the first number of Saturn, and 45 the last. (The sum of the numbers in the magic square of Saturn is 45.) That corresponds beautifully with

everything you have got so far; but then of course you must know if he is "one of the believing Jinn." Briefly, is he a friend or an enemy? You accordingly say to him "The word of the Law is Θελημα" It turns out that he doesn't understand Greek at all, so you were certainly right in choosing Hebrew. You put it to him, "What is the word of the Law?" and he replies darkly. "The word of the Law is Thora." That means nothing to you; any one might know as much as that, Thora being the ordinary word for the Sacred Law of Israel, and you accordingly ask him to spell it to make sure you have heard aright; and he gives you the letters, perhaps by speaking them, perhaps by showing them: Teth, Resh, Ayin. You add these up and get 279. This again is divisible by the Saturnian 3, and the result is 93; in other words, he has been precisely right. On the plane of Saturn one may multiply by three and therefore *he has given you the correct word "Thelema" in a form unfamiliar to you*. You man now consider yourself satisfied of his good faith, and may proceed to inspect him more closely. The stars above his head suggest the influence of Binah, whose number also is three, while the most striking thing about him is the core of his being: the letter Yod. (One does not count the termination "AH": being a divine suffix it represents the inmost light and the outermost light.) This Yod, this spark of intense brilliance, is of the pale greenish gold which one sees (in this world) in the fine gold leaf of Tibet. It glows with ever greater intensity as you concentrate upon observing him, which you could not do while you were preoccupied with investigating his credentials.

Confidence being thus established, you inquire why he as appeared to you at this time and at this place; and the answer to this question is of course your original idea, that is to say, he is presenting to you in other terms that "mountainous Fugue" which invoked him. You listen to him with attention, make such enquiries as seem good to you, and record the proceedings.

The above example is, of course, pure imagination, and represents a very favourable case. You are only too likely, and that not only at the beginning, to meet all sorts of difficulties and dangers.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

1) The passage quoted is from chapter 13 (ΙΓ), "Pilgrim-Talk" p. 36 of the second edition – T.S. See: Book of Lies.

2) The last stanza of Crowley's poem “At Sea,” published in Equinox I (9). The Equinox publication had “Maker and moulder of them all,” as the third line – T.S.

Chapter 18

The Importance of our Conventional Greetings, etc.

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

From time to time I have exhorted you with mine accustomed matchless eloquence never to neglect the prescribed Greetings: but I think it just as well to collect the various considerations connected with their use—and in "Greetings" I include "saying Will" before set meals, the four daily adorations of the Sun (Liber CC, vel Resh) and the salutation of Our Lady the Moon. I propose to deal with the general object of the combined rituals, not with the special virtues of each separately.

The practice of Liber III vel Jugorum[1)] is the complement of these grouped customs. By sharp physical self-chastisement when you think, say, or do whatever it is that you have set yourself to avoid doing, you set a sentry at the gate of your mind ready to challenge all comers, and so you acquire the habit of being on the alert. Keep this in mind, and you will have no difficulty in following the argument of this letter.

When you are practicing Dharana[2)] concentration, you allow yourself so many minutes. It is a steady, sustained effort. The mind constantly struggles to escape control. (I hope you remember the sequence of "breaks." In case you don't, I summarize them.

1. Immediate physical interruptions: Asana should stop these.
2. Things that are "on you mind."
3. Reverie, and "Wouldn't it help if I were to— ?"
4. Atmospherics—e.g. voices apparently from some alien source.

5. Aberrations of the control itself; and the result itself. (Remember the practice of some Hindu schools: “Not that, not that!” to whatever it is the presents itself as Tat Sat—reality, truth).

Need I remind you how urgent the wish to escape will assuredly become, how fantastic are the mind's devices and excuses, amounting often to deliberate revolt? In Kandy I broke away in a fury, and dashed down to Colombo with the intention of painting the very air as red as the betel- spittle on the pavements! But after three days of futile search for satisfying debauchery I came back to my horses, and, sure enough, it was merely that I had gone stale; the relaxation soothed and steadied me; I resumed the discipline with redoubled energy, and Dhyana dawned before a week had elapsed.

I mention this because it is the *normal* habit of the mind to organize these counter-attacks that makes their task so easy. What you need is a mind that will help rather than hinder your Work by its *normal* function.

This is where these Greetings, and Will-sayings, and Adorations come in.

It is not a concentration-practice proper; I haven't a good word for it. “Background-concentration” or “long-distance-concentration” are clumsy, and not too accurate. It is really rather like a public school education. One is not constantly “doing a better thing that one has ever done;” one is not dropping one's eye-glass every two minutes, or being a little gentleman in the act of brushing one's hair. The point is that one trains oneself to react properly at any moment of surprise. It must become “second nature” for “Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.” to spring to the forefront of the mind when one is introduced to a stranger, or comes down to breakfast, or hears the telephone bell, or observes the hour of the adoration, (these are to be the superficial reactions, like instinctively rising when a lady enters the room), or, at the other end, in moments of immediate peril, or of sudden apprehension, or when in one's meditation, one approaches the deepest strata.

One need not be dogmatic about the use of these special words. One might choose a formula to represent one's own particular True Will. It is a little like Cato, (or Scipio, was it?) who concluded every speech, whether about the Regulations of the Roman Bath or the proposal to reclaim a marsh of the Maremma, with the words: “And moreover, in my opinion, Carthage ought to be destroyed.”

Got it?

You teach the mind to push your thought automatically to the very thing from which it was trying to wander. “Yes, I get you Stephen! . . . But, Uncle Dudley, come clean, do you always do all this yourself? Don't you sometimes feel embarrassed, or fear that you may destroy the effect of your letter, or “create a scene” in the public street when you suddenly stop and perform these incomprehensible antics, or simply forget about the whole thing?”

Yes, I do.

Peccavi.

Mea culpa, mea maxima culpa.

I am *not* your old and valued friend, Adam Qadmon, the Perfect Man.

I am a pretty poor specimen.

I am nothing to cable about to Lung Peng Choung, or Himi, or Monsalvat.

I do forget now and again; though, I am glad to say, not nearly as often as I used to do. (As the habit is acquired, it tends to strengthen itself). But often I deliberately omit to do my duty. I do funk it. I do resent it. I do feel that it's too much bother.

As I said above, Adam Qadman is *not* my middle name.

Well now, have I any shadow of an excuse? Yes, I have, after a fashion; I don't think it good manners to force my idiosyncrasies down people's throats, and I don't want to appear more of an eccentric than I need. It might detract from my personal influence, and so actually harm the Work that I am trying to perform. . .

“Yes, that's all very well, Alibi Ike; you are exceedingly well know as a Scripture-quoting Satan, as a Past-Master in self-justification. Trained from infancy by the Plymouth Brethern, who for casuistry leave the Jesuits at the post!” “Yes, yes, but — — —.”

“You needn't but me no buts, you old he-goat! Wasn't there once a Jonas Hanway, the first man to sport an umbrella? Wouldn't your practice be natural, and right, and the cream of the cream of good manners as soon as a few hundred people of position took to doing it? And wouldn't Thomas, Richard, and Henry, three months later, make a point of doing the same as their betters?” (That was Conscience speaking.)

All right, you win.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

1) See Magick in Theory and Practice, pp. 427 - 429.-AC

2) Book 4, Part I.—AC

Chapter 19

The Act of Truth

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

It seems that last Wednesday I so far forgot myself as to refer to the “Act of Truth” in conversation, and never mentioned what it is when it's at home, or why anyone should perform it, or what happens when one does perform it!

All right, I will remedy that; luckily, it is a very simple matter; very important, perfectly paradoxical and devastatingly effective.

Analysed, it is to make the assumption that something which seems very wrong is actually all right, that an eager wish is an accomplished fact. a reasonable anxiety, entirely unfounded—and to act accordingly.

For instance, I'm in some desolate place, dependent for my food supply on a weekly messenger. If he is a day late, it is awkward; if two, it means hardship; if three, serious risk. One is naturally anxious as the day approaches; perhaps the weather, or some similar snag, makes it likely that he will be late. From one cause or another, I have rather exceeded my ration. There is nothing I can do about it, materially.

The sensible course of action is to draw in my horns, live on the minimun, necessary to life, *which involves cutting the day's work down to almost nothing*, and hope for the best, expecting the worst.

But there is a Magical mode of procedure. You say to yourself: I am here to do this Work in accordance with my true Will. The Gods have got to see to it that I'm not baulked by any blinking messenger. (But take care They don't overhear you; They might mistake it for Hybris, or presumption. Do it all in the Sign of Silence, under the aegis of Harpocrates, the “Lord of Defence and Protection”; be careful to assume his God-form, as standing on two crocodiles. Then you increase your consumption, and at the same time put in a whole lot of extra Work. If you perform

this “Act of Truth” properly, with *genuine* conviction that nothing can go wrong, your messenger will arrive a day early, and bring an extra large supply.

This, let me say at once, is very difficult, especially at first, until one has gained confidence in the efficacy of the Formula; and it is very nastily easy to “fake.” Going through the motions (as they say) is more futile here than in most cases, and the results of messing it up are commonly disastrous.[1)]

You must invent your act to suit your case, every time; suppose you expect a cable next Friday week, transferring cash to your account. You need $500 to make up an important payment, and you don't know whether they will send even $200. What are you going to do about it? Skimp, and save your expenses, and make yourself miserable and incapable of vigorous thought or action? You *may* succeed in saving enough to swing the deal; but you won't get a penny beyond the amount actually needed—and look at the cost in moral grandeur!

No, go and stand yourself a champagne luncheon, and stroll up Bond Street with an 8 1/2 “Hoyo de Monterey,” and squander $30 on some utterly useless bauble. Then the $500 will swell to $1000, and arrive two days early at that!

There are one or two points to consider very carefully indeed before you start:—

1. The proposed Act must be *absurd*; it won't do at all if by some fluke, however unlikely, it might accomplish your aim. For instance, it's no use backing an outsider. There must be no causal link.

2. The Act must be one which makes the situation definitely worse. *E.g.*: suppose you are counting on a new dress to make a hit at a Reception, and doubt whether it is so much better than your present best, or whether it will be finished in time. Then, wear that present best to-night (wet, of course), knowing you are sure to soil it.

3. Obviously, all the usual conditions of a Magical Operation apply in this as in all cases; your aim must conform with your True Will, and all that; but there is one curious point about an Act of Truth: this, that one should resort to it only when there is no other method possible. In the explorer's case, above, it won't do if he has any means of hurrying up the messenger.

It seems to me that the above brief sketch should suffice an intelligent and imaginative student like yourself; but if any point remains darkling, let me know, and I will follow up with a postscript.

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

P.S.—I thought it might help you if I were to make a few experiments. I have done so. Result: this is much more difficult and delicate an affair than I had thought when I wrote this letter. For instance, one single thought of a "second string"—e.g. "if it fails, I had better do so and so"—is enough to kill the while operation stone dead. Of course, I am totally out of practice; but, even so . . . . . .

1) Do not be misled by any apparent superficial resemblance to "Christian Science" and "Coueism" and their cackling kin. They miss every essential feature of the formula.—AC

Chapter 20

Talismans: The Lamen: The Pantacle

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Really you comfort me when you turn from those abstruse and exalted themes with which you have belaboured me so often of late to dear cuddlesome little questions like this in our letter received this morning: "*Do* please, dear Master, give me some hints about how to make Talismans (that's the same as Telesmata, isn't it? Yes, 666) and the Pantacle. The official instructions are quite clear, of course;[1] but somehow I find them just a little frightening."

Well, I think I know pretty well what you mean; so I will try to imitate the style of Aunt Tabitha in "The Flapper's Fireside."

For one thing, you forgot to mention the Lamen. Now what *are* these things when they are at home? That's easy enough.

The Lamen is a sort of Coat of Arms. It expresses the character and powers of the wearer.

A talisman is a storehouse of some particular kind of energy, the kind that is needed to accomplish the task for which you have constructed it.

The Pantacle is often confused with both the others; accurately, it is a "Minutum Mundum", "the Universe in Little"; it is a map of all that exists, arranged in the Order of Nature. There is a chapter in *Book 4*, Part II, devoted to it (pp. 117 - 129); I cannot make up my mind whether I like it. At the best it is very far from being practical instruction. (The chapter on the Lamen, pp. 159 - 161, is even worse.)

An analogy, not too silly, for these three; the Chess-player, the Openings, and the Game itself.

But—you will object—why be silly at all? Why not say simply that the Lamen, stating as it does the Character and Powers of he wearer, is a dynamic portrait of the individual, while the Pantacle, his Universe, is a static portrait of him? And *that*, you pursue flattering, is why you preferred to call the Weapon of Earth (in the Tarot) the Disk, emphasizing its continual whirling movement rather than the Pantacle of Coin, as is more usual. Once again, exquisite child of our Father the Archer of Light and of seaborn Aphrodite, your well-known acumen has "nicked the ninety and nine and one over" as Browning says when he (he too!) alludes to the Tarot.

As you will have gathered from the above, a Talisman is a much more restricted idea; it is no more than one of the objects in his Pantacle, one of the arrows in the quiver of his Lamen. As, then, you would expect, it is very little trouble to design. All that you need is to "make considerations" about your proposed operation, decide which planet, sign, element or sub-element or what not you need to accomplish your miracle.

As you know, a very great many desirable objects can be attained by the use of the talismans in the Greater and Lesser Keys of Solomon the King; also in Pietro di Abano[2)] and the dubious Fourth Book of Cornelius Agrippa.[3)]

You must on no account attempt to use the squares given in the *Book of the Sacred Magic of Abramelin the Mage* until you have succeeded in the Operation. More, unless you mean to perform it, and are prepared to go to any length to do so, you are a fool to have the book in your possession at all. Those squares are liable to get loose and do things on their own initiative; and you won't like it.

The late Philip Haseltine, a young composer of genius, used one of these squares to get his wife to return to him. He engraved it neatly on his arm. I don't know how he proceeded to set to work; but his wife came back all right, and a very short time afterwards he killed himself.

Then there are the Elemental Tablets of Sir Edward Kelly and Dr. John Dee. From these you can extract a square to perform almost any conceivable operation, if you understand the virtue of the various symbols which they manifest. They are actually an expansion of the Tarot. (Obviously, the Tarot itself as a whole is a universal Pantacle—forgive the pleonasm! Each card, especially is this true of the Trumps, is a talisman; and the whole may also be considered as the Lamen of Mercury. It is evidently an Idea far too vast for any human mind to comprehend in its entirety. For it is "the Wisdom whereby He created the worlds.")

The decisive advantage of this system is not that its variety makes it so adaptable to our needs, but that we already posses the Invocations necessary to call forth the Energies required. What is perhaps still more to the point, they work without putting the Magician to such severe toil and exertion as is needed when he has to write them out from his own ingenium. Yes! This is weakness on my part, and I am very naughty to encourage you to shirk the hardest path.

I used often to make the background of my Talismans of four concentric circles, painting then, the first (inmost) in the King (or Knight) scale, the second in the Queen, the third in the Prince, and the outermost in the Princess scale, of the Sign, Planet, or Element to which I was devoting it. On this, preferably in the "flashing" colours, I would paint the appropriate Names and Figures.

Lastly, the Talisman may be surrounded with a band inscribed with a suit- able "versicle" chosen from some Holy book, or devised by the Magician to suit the case.

In the British Museum (and I suppose elsewhere) you may see the medal struck to commemorate the victory over the Armada. This is a reproduction, perhaps modified, of the Talisman used by Dee to raise the storm which scattered the enemy fleet.

You must lay most closely to your heart the theory of the Magical Link (see *Magick* pp. 107 - 122) and see well to it that it rings true; for without this your talisman is worse than useless. It is dangerous; for all that Energy is bound to expend itself somehow; it will make its own links with anything handy that takes its fancy; and you can get into any sort of the most serious kind of trouble.

There is a great deal of useful stuff in *Magick*; pp. 92 - 100, and pp. 179 - 189. I could go on all night doing nothing but indicating sources of information.

Then comes the question of how to "charge" the Talisman, of how to evoke or to invoke the Beings concerned, and of—oh! of so much that you need a lifetime merely to master the theory.

Remember, too, please, what I have pointed out elsewhere, that the greatest Masters have quite often not been Magicians at all, technically; they have used such devices as Secret Societies, Slogans and Books. If you are so frivolous as to try to exclude these from our discourse, it is merely evidence that you have not understood a single word of what I have been trying to tell you these last few hundred years!

May I close with a stray example or so? *Equinox* III, 1, has the Neophyte's Pantacle of Frater O.I.V.V.I.O.[4] The Frontispiece of the original (4 volume) edition of *Magick*, the colors vilely reproduced, is a Lamen of my own Magick, or a Pantacle of the Science, I'm sure I'm not sure which![5]

Most of my Talismans, like my Invocations, have been poems.[6] This letter must be like the *Iliad* in at least one respect: it does not end; it stops.

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

1) The official instruction on the Pantacle (in Liber A vel Armorum) states, inter alia, that it should bear "a symbol to represent the Universe." The Pantacle and Lamen are both, as Crowley notes, discussed in Book 4 part II. I am not aware of any official A∴A∴ instruction dealing directly with Talismans – T.S.

2) The reference is unlikely to be to the Heptameron, a 16th century Grimoire spuriously attributed to Abano, as this does not deal with talismans at all, rather it is a ritual for the evocation of planetary spirits. According to writers such as Frances Yates and D.P. Walker, some of the undisputed works of Pietro d'Abano deal with astrological images and the talismanic use of the same, although I have been unable to consult these directly – T.S.

3) "The Fourth Book of Occult Philosophy, or of Magical Ceremonies" was a short work on magical practice which first came to public attention in the 1550s, some twenty years after the death of its alleged author. It purports to be a "complement and key" to Agrippa's De Occulta Philosophia libri tres. The author credit is generally regarded as spurious. It does however treat at length of the composition of "pentacles" (pentacula; as described by pseudo-Agrippa they belong more under the head of "talismans" in Crowley's classification), giving a few examples – T.S.

4) C.S. Jones (Frater Achad). Achad's Lamen design also appeared in that issue – T.S.

5) The design was reproduced as a colour painting by Steffi Grant in her essay on Crowley published as Carfax Monograph #3 (reprinted in Hidden Lore by Kenneth and Steffi Grant, London: Skoob, 1989), as a black and white line drawing by the same artist in the 1973 RKP edition of Crowley's Magick, and as a colour graphic redrawn by an unidentified illustrator on the dust-jacket of the 1994 "Blue Brick" Weiser edition of Magick – T.S.

6) See also The Books of the Beast by Timothy d'Arch Smith for Crowley's use of "talismanic" principles in book design – T.S.

Chapter 21

My Theory of Astrology

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

A few well-chosen words about Astrology? Madam, I am only too happy to oblige: our aim is to serve. The customer is usually wrong; but statistics indicate that it doesn't pay to tell him so.

It seems a long while since I set up your Nativity, and read it, but it is very clear in my mind that you were astonished, as so many others have been, by the simplicity and correctness of my reading. It began, you remember, by your giving me the usual data when we dropped in for tea at the Anglers' Rest. I calculated the Ascendant on the spot, and remarked “Rubbish!” I looked at you again very carefully; and, after many grunts, observed, “More likely half-past ten—within an hour one way or the other.” You insisted; I insisted. Unwilling to make a Fracas in the Inn, we decided to put you to the trouble of writing to your mother to settle the dispute. Back came the answer: “within a few minutes of eleven. I remember because your father had hung on as long as he could—he had to take the morning service.”

This occurrence is very common in my experience; I have contradicted what sounded like ascertained fact and proved on enquiry to have been right; so, considering that the statistics I made many years ago showed me to have been right 109 times out of 120, I think two things are fairly near probation; firstly, I am not guessing—that doesn't matter much; but, secondly, which is of supreme importance, there is a definite connection between the personal appearance and manner of the native, and the Sign of the Zodiac which was rising when he first drew air into his lungs.

Let me add, to strengthen the argument, that on the few occasions where I have erred there has been a good astrological reason for it. E.g. I might plump for Pisces rising when it was actually Capricornus; but in that case Saturn would have been afflicted by being in Cancer, with bad aspects from Venus and the Moon, thus

taking away all his rugged, male, laborious qualities, and in the Ascendant might have been Jupiter, suggesting many of the qualities of Pisces: and so forth.

Now let me start! You want me to explain the system—or no-system!—which I use. I do not "move in a mysterious way My wonders to perform;" for nothing could be simpler. For its origin I have to thank Abramelin the Mage, who empties the vials of his scorn upon the astrologers of his time with their meticulous calculations of "the hours of the planets" and so on. I think he goes too far when he says that a planet can have no influence at all, or very little, unless it is above the horizon; but he meant well, bless him! And, though he does not say so, I believe that I do my stuff in very much the same way as he did.

Modern astrologers multiply their charts until their desks remind me of a Bargain Basement in the rush hour! They compare and contrast until they are in bat-eyed bewilderment bemused; and when the answer turns out absolutely false, exclaim, what a shout: "By Ptolemy, I forgot to look at the last Luniation for Buda-Pesth!" But then they can *always* find something or other which will explain how they came to go wrong: naturally, when you have several hundred factors, helplessly bound and gagged, it would be just too bad if you couldn't pick out one to serve your turn—after the event! No, dear girl, it should be obvious to an unweaned brat: (a) they can't see the wood for the trees, (b) they are using Ruach on a proposition which demands Neschamah. Intellect is quite inadequate; the problem requires mother-wit, intuition, understanding.

Here is my system in a Number 000 Ampoule.

Put up the figure at birth: study it, make notes of the aspects and dignities, concentrate—and turn on the Magical Tap!

Occasionally, when I began, I set up the "progressed figure" to see how the patient was doing this week, but it never seemed to help enough to compensate for the distraction caused by the complication. What I do observe to examine the situation of to-day is Transits. These I have found very reliable; but even with these I usually ignore aspects of minor importance. Truth to tell, conjunctions mean very much more than the rest put together.

Talking of aspects, I think it ridiculous to allow vast "orbs" like 15— for Luna, and 12— for Sol. Astrologers go to extreme lengths to calculate the "solar revolution" figure not to a degree, not to a minute, but to a second: and that when they don't know the exact time of birth within half an hour or more! Talk about straining at a

gnat and swallowing a camel! Then what does an hour or so matter anyhow, if you are going to allow an aspect, whether it is 2— or 10— off? This even with delicate aspects like the quintile or semi-sextile. What would you think of a doctor who had a special thermometer made to register -1/100 of a degree, and never took notice of the fact that the patient had just swallowed a cupful of scalding hot tea?

In my own work, I disallow a deviation of 5— or 6— from the exact aspect, unless there is some alien reason for thinking that it is actually operative. With the minor aspects, I dislike reckoning with them if they are even 3— away.

Nor do I see any sense in marking the odd minutes in the Ascendant, when one is not sure even of the decan.

That seems to be about all that is necessary for my "morning hate;" suppose we go on to the question of interpretation.

Thousands of books have been written on Astrology; nobody could possible read them all thoroughly, and he would be a great fool to try. But he may do little harm by going into them far enough to observe that hardly any half-dozen are agreed even on the foundations of their system, hardly any two upon the meaning of any given aspect, dignity, or position; there is not always agreement even upon what questions pertain to which houses.

There are a few completely quack systems, such as those which mix up the science with Toshosophical[1)] hypotheses; naturally you discard these. But even of generally acceptable forms of Astrology, such as Mundane and Horary, I tend to be distrustful. I ask, for instance, why, if Taurus rules Poland and Ireland, as is no doubt the case, the crash and massacres of 1939 e.v. and later in the one did not take place in the other. All the seaports of the world naturally come under one of the three watery signs; but we do not find that an affliction of Pisces, which hits Tunis, should do harm to all the other harbours similarly ruled.

This brings us to the first Big Jump in the steeplechase of the whole science. We hear of thousands of people being killed at the same time (within an hour or two, perhaps a minute or two) by earthquake, shipwreck, explosion, battle or other form of violence. Was the horoscope of every one of the victims marked with the probability of some such end? I have known very strange cases of coincidence, but not to *that* extent!

The answer, I believe, is manifold. It might be, for example, that Poland and Ireland are ruled by different degrees of Taurus; that there are major and minor

figures, the former overruling the latter, so that the figure of the launching of the "Titanic" swallowed up the nativities of the victims of her wreck.

Something of this sort is really an obvious truth. Flood in China, famine in India, pestilence anywhere, evidently depend on maps of a scale far more enormous than the personal.

Then—on this point I feel reasonably sure—there may be one or more factors of which we know nothing at all, by which the basic possibilities of a figure are set to work. (Just as a car with engine running will not start until the clutch is put in.)

I will conclude by announcing a rather remarkable position.

1. I see no objection at all to postulating that certain "rays," or other means of transmitting some peculiar form or forms of energy, may reach us from the other parts of the solar system; for we can in fact point to perfectly analogous phenomena in the discoveries of the last hundred years or so. But that is no more than a postulate.
2. The objections to Astrology as such, indicated by what I have already pointed out, and several others, would suffice to place me among the most arrogant disbelievers in the whole study, were it not for what follows.
3. The facts with regard to the Ascendant are so patent, so undeni- able, and so inexplicable without the postulate in (1), that I am utterly convinced of the fundamental truth of the basic principles of the science.

I said, "I will conclude"; and I meant it. For now that (or so I hope) you respect sufficiently my conviction that Astrology is a genuine science and not a messy mass of *O*ld *W*ives' *T*ales, you will obviously demand instruction as to how to learn it, that you may verify my opinion in the light of your own experiments.

This will look much better if I put it in a separate letter.

'Till then—

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

1) By now this term has appeared several times, and it will be going by more than a few times ahead. Crowley disdained to apply “Theosophical” to the movement of Anne Besant, preferring to reserve the word for older systems. He coined the word “TOSHosophical” to replace “Theosophical” in these references – WEH.

Chapter 22

How to Learn the Practice of Astrology

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

“Up guards, and at 'em!” First, you must know your correspondences by heart backwards and upside down (air connu.) They are practically all in *The Book of Thoth*; but “if anyone anything lacks,” look for it in *777*.

Then, get a book on Astrology, the older the better. Raphael's *Shilling Handbook* is probably enough for the present purpose. Get well into your head what the menu says about the natures of the planets, the influence of the aspects, what is meant by dignities, the scope of the houses, and so on.

Dovetail all this with your classical knowledge; the character and qualities, the powers and the exploits, of the several deities concerned.

Next, learn how to set up a figure of the heavens. This need not take an average intelligent person more than an hour at the most. You can learn it from a book. Lastly, get Barley's *1001 Notable nativities* and *More Nativities*. Also any other collections available. Practice setting up the horoscopes. Use the Chaldean square system; it shows at the first glance what is happening in the angular houses, which are the keys of the whole figure.

Compare and contrast what you know of the natives, from history, with what is said of the aspects (and the rest) in the books you have read.

Put together similar horoscopes; e.g. a dozen which have Sagittarius rising, another lot with Jupiter in the mid-heaven, and so on; see if you can find a similarity in their lives with what the books will have led you to expect.

Don't be afraid to criticise; on the contrary, do some research work on your own, and find cases which seem to contradict tradition.

Instance: Saturn in the M.C. is said to cause a spectacular rise in a man's career, ending in an equally notable crash. Examples: Napoleon I and III, Oscar Wilde, Woodrow Wilson, Lord Northcliffe, Hitler. Look for figures with Saturn thus placed, whose natives have jogged along equably and died in the odour of sanctity. Find out why what worked in some cases failed in the others.

By the time you have studied (say) 500 nativities you will be already a fairly competent judge. Work your bloody guns! as Kipling says; get a friend—just this once I allow you human intercourse—to set up for you figures of historical importance, or with some outstanding characteristic (e.g. murderers, champions of sport, statesmen, monsters, philanthropists, heresiarchs) without telling you to whom it refers.

Build up the character, profession, story from the nativity. It sounds incredible; but more than a score of times I have been actually able to name him!

By the time you have got good at this game—and a most amusing game it is—you may call yourself a very competent astrologer.

Sometimes, even now, you may assign the figure of the Archbishop of York to Jabez Balfour or Catherine de Medici; or mix up Moody and Sankey with Brown and Kennedy; don't be discouraged; perhaps there may be something to be said for you after all!

I believe, as I hope, that you will be surprised at the speed with which you acquire proficiency.

All this time, moreover, you have not been wholly idle. You will have been running about like a demented rabbit, and trying to spot the rising sign of everybody you know. Look at them full-face, then profile; and note salient characteristics, pendulous lips, receding chins, bulbous noses, narrow foreheads, stuck-out ears, pimples, squints, warts, shape of face (three main types; thin, jutting, for cardinal signs; square, steadfast for cherubic; weak, nondescript, for the rest); then the stature, whether lithe, well-knit, sturdy, muscular, fat or what not; in short every bodily feature in turn; make up your mind what sign was rising at birth, and stick to it!

Now to verify your suspicions. The conversation may run thus:

You: “Can you answer a question without answering another which you were not asked?”

It, surprised: “Why, yes, of course I can.”

You: “Good. Then, do you know the date of the Battle of Waterloo?”

It: “1815.”

You probably have to explain! In any case you begin all over again, when he has contented himself with “Yes” or “No” you say “Do you know the hour of your birth?” If he says “No,” you ask if he can find out, and so on. If he says “Yes;” “Then tell me either the hour or the day and month; *but not both*.” If he gives you the hour, you calculate a bit, and say: “Then you were born on the *n*th of *X*ember, within a fortnight either way.”

If he tells you his birthday, work it out as before and then: “You were born at P in the morning within an hour either way.” (This makes it about 11 to 1 against your being right, in either case, on pure chance.)

Again, you can practise this in cafés, when you visit civilized countries, and it is often possible to scrape acquaintance with people who look specially interesting, and do not, as in England, instantly suspect you of dishonourable advances, and get them to play up. This is sometimes easier when you are already with that friend which I was so lax as to allow you; and it is, I own, very helpful to discuss strange faces if only to make it quite clear to your own mind why you decide on one as Virgo, another as Taurus.

A strange thing happened once; I had explained all this to the girl that I happened to be living with: that is, I taught her the names of the signs; she knew no Astrology, net even the simple correspondences. After about a month, she was better at it than I was! (“Why strange?” you mutter rudely. “Quite right, my dear! I have always been a wretched reader of character. Bless my soul! there was a time when I had hopes of you,” I savagely retort.) She had picked up the knack, the trick of it; she could select, eliminate, re-compose, compare with past experience, and form a judgment, without knowing the names of its materials.

When you have got your sea-legs at both these parts of your astrological education, you may (I think) put out to sea with some confidence. Perhaps a fair test of your fitness would be when you got three people right out of four, in a total of a score or so. Well, allow for my being in a “mood” to-night; call it two out of three. If it were guesswork, after all, that means you are bringing it off at seven to one. Obviously, when you do go wrong, set up the figure, study it more carefully than ever, and find out what misled you.

Remember constantly that the Statistical Method is your one and only safeguard against self-deception.

Within the limits of a letter I could hardly hope to go into matters much more fully or deeply than I have done; but 'pon my soul! I think that what I have said should be enough for an intelligent and assiduous student. Let me insist that *all* that is worth while comes by experience. Learning one thing will give you the clue to another.

Well do I know to my sorrow how hard it is, as a rule, to learn how to do a thing solely from written instruction; so perhaps you had better arrange to see me one day about the actual setting-up of a figure. Probably, too, there will be a few points that you would like to discuss.

I will end by betting you six clothing coupons to a pound of sugar that in two years' concentrated work on these lines you will become a better astrologer than ever I was. (This is very cunning of me; in two years we shall all be getting clothes without coupons.)

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

Chapter 23

Improvising a Temple

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

(This letter has been provoked by points discussed in your recent visit.)

As some of your daily practices are ceremonial, it should not come amiss to vouchsafe a few hints of practical service. For in ritual Magick, it will of course be the first care to get everything balanced and *tidy*.

If you propose to erect a regular Temple, the most precise instructions in every detail are given in *Book 4*, Part II. (But I haven't so much as seen a copy for years!) There is a good deal scattered about in Part III (*Magick*, which you have) especially about the four elemental weapons.

But if circumstances deny you for the moment the means of carrying out this Ædification as the Ideal would have it, you can certainly do your best to create a fairly satisfactory—above all, workable—substitute.

(By the way, note the moral aspect of a house, as displayed in our language. "Edification"—"house-making": from Latin *Aedes*, "house". "Economy"—"house-ruling": from the Greek "ΟΙΚΟΣ", "House" and "ΝΟΜΟΣ", "law.")

I was often reduced to such expedients when wandering in strange lands, camping on glaciers, and so on. I fixed it workably well. In Mexico, D.F. for instance, I took my bedroom itself for the Circle, my night-table for the Altar, my candle for the Lamp; and I made the Weapons compact. I had a Wand eight inches long, all precious stones and enamel, to represent the Tree of Life; within, an iron tube containing quicksilver—very correct, lordly, and damsilly. What a club! Also, bought, a silver-gilt Cup; for Air and Earth I made one sachet of rose-petals in yellow silk, and another in green silk packed with salt. In the wilds it was easy, agreeable and most efficacious to make a Circle, and build an altar, of stones; my Alpine Lantern served admirably for the Lamp. It did double duty when required:

e.g. in partaking of the Sacrament of the Four Elements, it served for Fire. But your conditions are not so restricted as this.

Let us consider what one can do with an ordinary house, such as you are happy enough to possess.

First of all, it is of immense advantage to have a room specially consecrated to the Work, never used for any other purpose, and never entered by any other person than yourself, unless it were another Initiate, either for inspection or in case you were working together.

The aura accumulates with the regularity and frequency of Use.

The first point is the Banishing: Everything is to be removed from the room which is not absolutely necessary to the Work.

In this country, one must attend to the heating. An electric stove in the East or the South, is best: it must not need attention. One can usually buy stoves with excellent appropriate symbolism. (Last time I did this—13 e.v.—I got a perfect Ferranti at Harrods. The circular copper bowl, with the central Disk as the source of heat, is unsurpassable.) The walls should be "self-coloured," a neutral tint—green, grey or blue-grey? and entirely bare, unless you put up, in the proper quarters, the proper designs, such as the "Watch Towers"—see *The Equinox* I, 7.[1)]

Remember that your "East," your Kiblah, is Boleskine House, which is as near as possible due North from Plymouth. Find North by the shadow of a vertical rod and noon, or by the Pole-Star. Work out the angle as usual.

The Stélé of Revealing may be just on the N. Wall to make your "East."

Next, your Circle. The floor ought to be "Earth" green; but white will serve, or black. (A Masonic carpet is not at all bad.) The Circle itself should be as shown in "Book 4", Part II; but as this volume is probably unavailable, ask me to show you the large painted diagram in my portfolio when next you visit me, and we can arrange for it to be copied.

This should then be painted in the correct colours on the floor: the Kether Square to the North, your "East."

The Altar must fit exactly the square of Tiphareth; it is best made as a cupboard; of oak or acacia, by preference. It can then be used to hold reserves of incense and other requisites.

Note that the height of the Altar has to suit your convenience. It is consequently in direct relation with your own stature; in proportion, it is a double cube. This then determines the size of your circle; in fact the entire apparatus and furniture is a geometrical function of yourself. Consider it all as a projection of yourself in terms of these conventional formulae. (A convention does really mean "that which is convenient." How abject, then to obey a self-styled convention which is actually as inconvenient as possible!)[2)]

Next, the Lamp. This may be of silver, or silver-gilt, (to represent the Path of Gimel) and is to be hung from the ceiling exactly above the centre of the altar. There are plenty of old church lamps which serve very well. The light is to be from a wick in a floating cork in a glass of olive oil. (I hope you can get it!) It is really desirable to make this as near the "Ever-burning Lamp of the Rosicrucians" as possible; it is *not* a drawback that this implies frequent attention.

Now for the Weapons!

The Wand. Let this be simple, straight and slim! Have you an Almond or Witch Hazel in your garden—or do I call it park? If so, cut (with the magick knife—I would lend you mine) a bough, as nearly straight as possible, about two feet long. Peel it, rub it constantly with Oil of Abramelin (this, and his incense, from Wallis and Co., 26 New Cavendish Street, W.1) and keep wrapped in scarlet silk, constantly, I wrote, and meant it; rub it, when saying your mantra, to the rhythm of that same. (Remember, "A ka dua" is the best; ask me to intone it to you when you next visit me.)

The Cup. There are plenty of chalices to be bought. It should be of silver. If ornamented, the best form is that of the apple. I have seen suitable cups in many shops.

The Sword. The ideal form is shown in the Ace of Swords in the Tarot.

At all events, let the blade be straight, and the hilt a simple cross. (The 32° Masonic Sword is not too bad; Kenning or Spencer in Great Queen Street, W.C.2 stock them—or used to do.)

The Disk. This ought to be of pure gold, with your own Pantacle, designed by yourself after prolonged study, graved thereupon. While getting ready for this any plain circle of gold will have to serve your turn. Quite flat, of course. If you want a good simple design to go on *interim*, try the Rosy Cross or the Unicursal Hexagram.

So much for the Weapons! Now, as to your personal accoutrements, Robe, Lamen, Sandals and the like, The Book of the Law has most thoughtfully simplified matters for us. “I charge you earnestly to come before me in a single robe, and covered with a rich headdress.” (AL I, 61) The Robe may well be in the form of the Tau Cross; i.e. expanding from axilla to ankle, and from shoulder to—whatever you call the place where your hands come out. (Shape well shown in the illustration *Magick* face p. 360). You being a Probationer, plain black is correct;[3)] and the Unicursal Hexagram might be embroidered, or “applique” (is it? I mean “stuck on”), upon the breast. The best head-dress is the Nemyss: I cannot trust myself to describe how to make one, but there are any number of models in the British Museum, on in any Illustrated Hieroglyphic text. The Sphinx wears one, and there is a photograph, showing the shape and structure very clearly, in the *Equinox* I, 1, frontispiece to Supplement. You can easily make one yourself out of silk; broad black-and-white stripes is a pleasing design. Avoid “artistic” complexities.

Well, that ought to be enough to keep you out of mischief for a little while; but I feel moved to add a line of caution and encouragement.

Listen!
Faites attention!
Achtung!
Khabardar karo!

Just as soon as you start seriously to prepare a place for magical Work, the world goes more cockeyed than it is already. Don't be surprised if you find that six weeks' intense shopping all over London fails to provide you with some simple requisite that normally you could buy in ten minutes. Perhaps your fires simply refuse to burn, even when liberally dosed with petrol and phosphorus, with a handful of Chlorate of Potash thrown in just to show there is no ill feeling! When you have almost decided that you had better make up your mind to do without something that seems really quite unobtainable—say, a sixty-carat diamond which *would* look so well on the head-dress—a perfect stranger comes along and makes you a present of one. Or, a long series of quite unreasonable obstacles or silly accidents interfere with your plans: or, the worst difficulty in your way is incomprehensibly removed by some extraordinary “freak of chance.” Or, . . .

In a word, you seem to have strolled into a world where—well, it might be going too far to say that the Law of Cause and Effect is suspended; but at least the Law of Probability seems to be playing practical jokes on you.

This means that your manoeuvres have somehow attracted the notice of the Astral Plane: your new neighbours (May I call them?) are taking an interest in the latest Tenderfoot, some to welcome, to do all they can to help you to settle down, others indignant or apprehensive at this disturbance of routine. This is where your Banishings and Invocations come to the rescue. Of course, I am not here referring to the approach to Sanctuaries which of necessity are closely guarded, but merely to the recognition of a new-comer to that part of the world in general.

Of course all these miracles are very naughty of you; they mean that your magical power has sprung a few small leaks; at least, the water is oozing between some planks not sealed as Hermetically as they should be. But oh and this is naughtier still—it is a blessed, blessed comfort that they happen, that chance, coincidence and all the rest will simply *not* explain it all away, that your new vision of life is not a dream, but part and parcel of Experience for evermore, a real as any other manifestation of Reality through sense such as is common to all men.

And this brings us—it has been a long way round—from the suggestion of your visit to the question (hitherto unanswered) in your letter.

You raise so vast and razor-edged a question when you write of the supposed antinomy of "soul" and "sense" that it seemed better to withhold comment until this later letter; much meditation was most needful to compress the answer within reasonable limits; even to give it form at all is no easy matter. For this is probably the symptom of the earliest stirring of the mind of the cave-man to reflection, thereunto moved by other symptoms—those of the morning after following upon the night before. It is—have we not already dealt with that matter after a fashion?—evidence of disease when an organ become aware of its own modes of motion. Certainly the mere fact of questioning Life bears witness to some interruption of its flow, just as a ripple on an even stream tells of a rock submerged. The fiercer the torrent and the bigger the obstacle, the greater the disturbance to the surface—have I not seen them in the Bralduh eight feet high? Lethargic folk with no wild impulse of Will may get through Life in bovine apathy; we may well note that (in a sense) the rage of the water seems to our perturbed imagining actually to increase and multiply the obstructions; there is a critical point beyond which the ripples fight each other!

That, in short, is a picture of you!

You have mistaken the flurry of passing over some actual snag for a snag in itself! You put the blame on to your own quite rational attempts to overcome difficulties. The secret of the trick of getting past the rocks is elasticity; yet it is that very quality with which you reproach yourself!

We even, at the worst, reach the state for which Buddhism, in the East presents most ably the case: as in the West, does James Thomson (B.V.) in *The City of Dreadful Night*; we come to wish for—or, more truly to *think* that we wish for "blest Nirvana's sinless stainless Peace" (or some such twaddle—thank God I can't recall Arnold's mawkish and unmanly phrase!) and B.V.'s "Dateless oblivion and divine repose."

I insist on the "think that you wish," because, if the real You did really wish the real That, you could never have come to exist at all! ("But I don't exist."—"I know—let's get on!")

Note, please, how sophistically unconvincing are the Buddhist theories of how we ever got into this mess. First cause: Ignorance. Way out, then, knowledge. O.K., that implies a knower, a thing known—and so on and so forth, through all the Three Waste Paper Baskets of the Law; analysed, it turns out to be nonsense all dolled up to look like thinking. And there is no genuine explanation of the origin of the Will to be.

How different, how simple, how self-evident, is the doctrine of *The Book of the Law*!

There are any number of passages dealing with this matter in my writings: let's forget them, and keep to the Text!

Cap. I, v. 26 ". . my ecstasy, the consciousness of the continuity of existence, the omnipresence of my body."

V. 30 "This is the creation of the world, that the pain of division is as nothing, and the joy of dissolution all." (There is a Qabalistic inner meaning in this text; "the pain," for instance, Ο ΑΛΓΟΣ, may be read XVII × 22 "the expression of Star-love," and so on: all too complicated for this time and place!)

V. 32. "Then the joys of my love" (*i.e*. the fulfillment of all possible experiences) "will redeem ye from all pain."

V. 58. “I give unimaginable joys on earth: certainty, not faith, while in life, upon death; peace[4] unutterable, rest, ecstasy; . . .”

Cap. II, v. 9 “Remember all ye that existence is pure joy; that all the sorrows are but as shadows; they pass & are done; but there is that which remains.”

(The continuation is amusing! vv. 10 and 11 read:

O prophet! thou hast ill will to learn this writing. I see thee hate the hand & the pen; but I am stronger.

At that time I was a hard-shell Buddhist, sent out a New Year's Card “wishing you a speedy termination of existence!” And this as a young man, with the world at my feet. It only goes to show . . . . .)

Vv. 19, 20. “Is a God to live in a dog? No! but the highest are of us. . . . Beauty and strength, leaping laughter and delicious languor, force and fire, are of us.”

This chapter returns over and over again to this theme in one form or another.

What is really more significant is the hidden, the unexpressed, soul of the Book; the way in which it leaps into wild spate of rhapsody on any excuse or no excuse.

This is surely more convincing than some dreary thesis plodding along doggedly with the “proof” (!) that “God is good,” every sentence creaking with your chalk-stones and squeaking with the twinges of your toe!

Yet just because I proclaim a doctrine of joy in the language of joy, people—dull camels—say I am not “serious.”

Yet I *have* found pleasure in harnessing the winged horses of the Sun to the ploughshare of Reason, in showing the validity of this doctrine in detail. It satisfies my sense of rhythm and of symmetry to explain that every experience, no matter what, must of necessity be a gain of grandeur, of grip, of comprehension and enjoyment ever growing as complexity and simplicity succeed each other in sublime systole and diastole, in strophe and antistrophe chanting against each other to the stars of the Night and of the Morning!

Of course it is easy as pie to knock all this to pieces by “lunatic logic,” saying: “Then toothache is really as pleasant as strawberry shortcake:“ You are hereby referred to *Eight Lectures on Yoga*. None of the terms I am using have been, or can be defined. All my propositions amount to no more than tautology: A. is A. You may even quote *The Book of the Law* itself: “Now a curse upon Because and his

kin! . . . . Enough of Because! Be he damned for a dog!" (AL II, 28-33). These things stink of Ignoratio Elenchi, or something painfully like it: as sort of slipping up a cog, of "confusing the planes" of willfully misunderstanding the gist of an argument. (All magicians, by the way, ought to be grounded solidly in Formal Logic.)

Never forget, at the least, how simple it is to make a maniac's hell-broth of any proposition, however plain to common sense.

All the above, now:—Buddhism refuted. Yet it is a possibility and therefore one facet of Truth. "Rest" is an idea: so immobility is one of the moving states. A certain state of mind is (almost by definition) "eternal," yet it most assuredly begins and ends.

And so on for ever—I fear it would be nugatory, pleonastic (and oh! several other lovely long adjectives!) to try to guard you from these hydra-headed and protean booby-traps; you must tackle them yourself as they arise, and deal with them as best you can: always remembering that often enough you cannot tell which is you and which is the Monkey Puzzle, or who has won. ("Everybody's won; so everybody must have a prize" applies beautifully). And none of it all matters a row of haricots verts sautés; for the conclusion must always be Doubt (see that beastly *Book of Lies* again—there's a gorgeous chapter about it[5]) and the practical moral is this: these contradictions don't occur (or don't matter) in Neschamah.

Also, it might help you quite a lot (by encouraging you when depressed, or amusing you when you want to relax) to read *Sir Palamedes the Saracen*; Supplement to *The Equinox*, Vol. I, No. 4. I expect quite a few of his tragi-comic misadventures will be already familiar to you in one disguise or another.

And if the above remarks should embolden you to exclaim: "Perhaps a little drink would do me no great harm" I shall feel that I have deserved well of my country!

For—see *Liber Aleph*, after Rabelais—the Word of the Last Oracle is TRINC.[6]

. . . .

This plaint of yours tails off—and perks up in so doing—with confession of Ambition, and considerations of what you must leave over to your next life. Very right! but all that is covered by your general programme. It is proper to assimilate these ideas with the fundamental structure of your mind: "Perhaps I had better

leave 'The Life and opinion of Battling Bill, the Ballarat Bruiser' till, shall we say, six incarnations ahead"—But perhaps you have acquired that already.

No, better still, concentrate on the Next Step! After all, it is the only one you can take, isn't it! Without lust of result, please!

And I shall leave anything else to the next letter.

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

P.S. "Next letter," yes, they are running into one another more than somewhat; it is better so, for life is like that. And we have the bold bad editor to sort them out.

1) The reference is to Liber LXXXIV vel Chanokh, otherwise known as "A brief abstract of the symbolic representation of the Universe as derived by Dr. John Dee from the skrying of Sir Edward Kelly."

2) The Circle described in Book 4 part II has an overall diameter of about 17 times the side of each square comprising the Tau (this assumes the distance between the inner and outer circle is about the same as the side of each square). The double cube altar is traditionally 44 inches high (about navel height on a six foot person) which will make the circle over 30 feet in diameter. This might be possible if you have the use of a small sports hall; it will not fit in most peoples' living rooms – T.S.

3) The robe of a Probationer, as can be deduced from photographs of the Rites of Eleusis and references in The Vision and the Voice and other writings of the Equinox period, was originally conceived of as white with no hood, a pentagram on the breast and the "Hexagram of Nature" (red triangle ascending, blue triangle descending, golden Tau in the centre) on the back – T.S.

4) "Peace": the glow of satisfaction at achievement. It is not "eternal," rather, it whets the appetite for another adventure. (Peace, η εἰρήνη = 189 = 7 × 9 × 3, the Venusian plus Lunar form of Unity.)

The transcript gave the factorisation as 7 times 9 times 13; this is wrong, but the analysis ("unity" is qabalistically referred to 13) suggests it may have been a slip by Crowley rather than a transcription error) – T.S.

The text has 189 as the total and 7x9x3 as the math; Regardie has 180 as the total and 7x9x13 which is even worse. FWIW η ειρηνη does enumerate via standard Greek isopsephy to 189, which is 7×3^3 or 7×9. 189 x 13 = 819, interestingly. Perhaps Crowley meant to write 7x3x3 and slipped on the 9, but then where does the "unity" reference come from? – Pralixus

5) Chapter 51, "Terrier-Work." See also Chapter 45, "Chinese Music." Quoted in chapter 29 of MWT – T.S.

6) O.F., "drink." vide François Rabelais, The Fifth and Last Book of the Heroic Acts and Sayings of the Good Pantagruel (in Gargantua and Pantagruel), cap. 45; Crowley, Liber Aleph vel CXI, cap. Zω (208).

Chapter 24

Necromancy and Spiritism

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Really, you make me ashamed of You! To write to ignorant me to wise you up about necromancy, when you have at your elbow the one supreme classic—Lévi's Chapter XIII in the *Dogme et Rituel*![1]

What sublimity of approach! What ingenuity of "considerations!" With what fatally sure steps marches his preparation! With what superb technique does he carry out his energized enthusiasm! And, finally, with what exact judicial righteousness does he sum the results of his great Evocation of Apollonius of Tyana!

Contrast with this elaborate care, rightness of every detail, earnestness and intentness upon the goal—contrast, I say, the modern Spiritist in the dingy squalor of her foul back street in her suburban slum, the room musty, smelling of stale food, the hideous prints, the cheap and rickety furniture, calling up any one required from Jesus Christ to Queen Victoria, all at a bob-a-nob!

Faugh! Let us return to clean air, and analyse Lévi's experiment; I believe that by the application of the principles set forth in my other letters on Death and Reincarnation, it will be simple to explain his partial failure to evoke Apollonius. You had better read them over again, to have the matter clear and fresh in your mind.

Now then, let me call you attention to the extreme care which Lévi took to construct a proper Magical Link between himself and the Ancient Master. Alas! It was rather a case of building with bricks made without straw; he had not at his command any fresh and vital object pertaining intimately to Apollonius. A "relic" would have been immensely helpful, especially if it had been consecrated and re-consecrated through the centuries by devout veneration. This, incidentally, is the great advantage that one may often obtain when invoking Gods; their images,

constantly revered, nourished by continual sacrifice, serve as a receptacle for the Prana driven into them by thousands or millions of worshippers. In fact, such idols are often already consecrated talismans; and their possession and daily use is at least two-thirds of the battle.

Apollonius was indeed as refractory a subject as Lévi could possibly have chosen. All the cards were against him.

Why? Let me remind you of the sublimity of the man's genius, and the extent of his attainment. Apollonius must certainly have made the closest links between his Ruach and his Supernal Triad, and this would have gone seeking a new incarnation elsewhere. All the available Ruach left floating around in the Akasha must have been comparatively worthless odds and ends, true Qlippoth or "Shells of the Dead"—just those parts of him, in a word, which Apollonius would have deliberately discarded at his death.

So what use would they be to Lévi? Even if there were among them a few such elements as would serve his purpose, they would have been devitalized and frittered away by the mere lapse of the centuries, since they had lost connection with the reality of the Sage. Alternatively, they might have been caught up and adopted by some wandering Entity, quite probably some malignant demon.

Qlipoth—Shells of the Dead—Obsessing Spirits! Here we are back in the pestilent purlieus of Walham Green, and the frowsty atmosphere of the frowsy "medium" and the squalid séance. "Look! but do not speak to them!" as Virgil warned Dante.

So let us look.

No! Let us first congratulate ourselves that this subject of Necromancy is so admirably documented. As to the real Art, we have not only Eliphas Lévi, but the sublimely simple account in the Old Testament of the Witch of Endor, her conjuring up of the apparition of Samuel to King Saul. A third classic must not be neglected: I have heard or read the story elsewhere—for the moment I cannot place it. But it is so brilliantly told in *I Write as I Please* by Walter Duranty that nothing could be happier than to quote him verbatim.

It was the story of a Bolshevik who conversed with a corpse. He told it to me himself, and undoubtedly believed it, although he was an average tough Bolshevik who naturally disbelieved in Heaven and Hell and a Life beyond the Grave. This man was doing 'underground' revolutionary work in St. Petersburg when the War broke out; but he was caught by the police and exiled to the far north of Siberia. In

the second winter of the War he escaped from his prison camp and reached an Eskimo village where they gave him shelter until the spring. They lived, he said, in beastly conditions, and the only one whom he could talk to was the Shaman, or medicine man, who knew a little Russian. The Shaman once boasted that he could foretell the future, which my Bolshevik friend ridiculed. The next day the Shaman took him to a cave in the side of a hill in which there was a big transparent block of ice enclosing the naked body of a man—a white man, not a native—apparently about thirty years of age with no sign of a wound anywhere. The man's head, which was clean-shaven, was outside the block of ice; the eyes were closed and the features were European. The shaman then lit a fire and burnt some leaves, threw powder on them muttering incantations, and there was a heavy aromatic smoke. He said in Russian to the bolshevik, 'Ask what you want to know.' The Bolshevik spoke in German; he was sure that the Shaman knew no German, but he was equally sure he saw the lips move and heard it answer, clearly, in German.

He asked what would happen to Russia, and what would happen to him. From the moving lips of the corpse came the reply that Russia would be defeated in war and that there would be a revolution; the Tzar would be captured by his enemies and killed on the eve of rescue; he, the Bolshevik, would fight in the Revolution but would suffer no harm; later, he would be wounded fighting a foreign enemy, but would recover and live long.

The Bolshevik did not really believe what he had seen although he was certain that he had seen it. I mean that he explained it by hypnotism or auto-suggestion or something of the kind; but it was true, he said, that he passed unscathed through the Revolution and the Civil War and was wounded in the Polish War when the Red Army recovered Kiev.

So also we are most fortunate in possessing the account almost beyond Heart's desire of Spiritism, in Robert Browning's *Mr. Sludge the Medium*. You see that I write “Spiritism” not “Spiritualism.” To use the latter word in this connection is vulgar ignorance; it denotes a system of philosophy which flourished (more or less) is the Middle Ages—read your Erdmann if you want the gruesome details. But why should you?

The model for Mr. Sludge was David Dunbar Home,[2)] who was really quite a distinguished person in his way, and succeeded in pulling some remarkably instructed and blue-blooded legs. Personally, I believe him to have been genuine, getting real results through pacts with elementals, demons or what not; for when he

was in Paris, arrangements were made for him to meet Eliphas Lévi; forthwith "he abandoned the unequal contest, and fled in terror from the accursed spot."

What annoyed Browning was that he had added to his collection of "Femora I have pulled", those appendages of Elizabeth Barrett; and where R.B. was there was no room for anyone else—as in the case of Allah!

R.B. was accordingly as spiteful as he could be, and that was not a little.

It is not fair to tar all mediums with the Sludge brush; there are many who could advance quite sincerely some of the apologia of Sludge. Why should a medium be immune to self-deception spurred by the Wish-Fiend? While there are people walking about outside the Bug-house who can find Mrs. Simpson and Generals de Gaulle, Franco, Allenby, Montgomery and who else in the "Centuries" of Nostradamus, we should be stupid to assign everything to conscious fraud.

In that case what about poor Tiny Aleister? Do please allow me the *happy young Eagles* of the *Old Testament*; what clearer prophecy of psychoanalysis, it's only the English for Freud and Jung and Adler!

No, by no means always fraud. Yet at any séance the "investigators" take no magical precautions soever—against, say, the impersonation of Iophiel[3] by Hismael, or the Doves of Venus by the A'arab Zareq. All they attempt especially at "demonstrations" and "materializations," is to guard with great elaboration and (as a rule) complete futility against the deceptions of the common conjuror. They are not expecting any genuine manifestation of the "Spirit World;" and this fact makes clear their true subconscious attitude.

As for those mediums who possess magical ability, they almost always come from the most ignorant classes—Celts are an exception to this rule—and have no knowledge whatever of the technique of the business. Worse, they are usually of the type that delights in the secret dirty affinities, and so naturally and gladly attract entities of the Qliphothic world to their magical circle. Hence tricksters, of the lowest elemental orders, at the best, come and vitalize odds and ends of the Ruach of people recently deceased, and perform astonishing impersonations. The hollow shells glow with infernal fire. Also, of course, they soak up vitality from the sitters, and from the medium herself.

Altogether, a most poisonous performance. And what do they get out of it? Even when the "Spirits" are really spirits, they only stuff the party up with a lot of trashy lies.

To this summary the Laws of Probability insist that there shall be occasional exceptions.

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

1) Dogme et Rituel de la Haute Magie, by Eliphas Lévi.

2) sic, s.b. Daniel Dunglas – T.S.

3) Iophiel: the Intelligence of Jupiter; Hismael: the Spirit of Jupiter; A'arab Zereq: the Ravens of Dispersion, Qliphoth of Netzach – T.S.

Chapter 25

Fascinations, Invisibility, Levitation, Transmutations, "Kinks in Time"

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Dear me! dear me! The world's indeed gone topsy-turvy if you have to ask *me* for the secrets of Fascination! Altogether tohu-bohu and the Temurah Thash raq![1)]

So much for a display of Old-World Courtly Manners; actually rubbish, for you might very well be fascinating without knowing how you worked the trick. In fact, I think that is the case ninety-nine times in a hundred. Besides, I read your letter carelessly; I overlooked the phrase in which you mention that you use the word as Lévi did; *i.e.* to cover all those types of "miracle" which depend on distracting the attention of, or otherwise composing, the miraclee—I invent a rather useful word, yes?

So let us see what sort of miracles those are.

To start with, I doubt if we can. Many of such thaumaturgic phenomena contain elements of illusion in greater or less degree; if the miraclee's mind is 100% responsible, I think the business becomes a mere conjuring trick.

My dictionary defines the verb: "to charm, to enchant; to act on by some irresistible influence; to captivate; to excite and allure irresistibly or powerfully."

For the noun it gets even deeper into technical Magic: "the act or power of fascinating or spell binding, often to one's harm; a mysterious, irresistible, alluring influence." (Personally, I have always used, or heard, it much less seriously: "attractive" hardly more). Skeat, surprisingly, is almost dumb: p. part. of "to enchant" and "from L. *fascinum*, a spell."

Yes, surprisingly; for the word is one of the many that means the Phallus. The implication is that there is some sexual element in the exciting and alluring quality, which lifts it altogether above mere "pleasing."

To my mind the implication is that there is some quality inherent which is cognate to that too totally irrational quasimagnetic force which has been responsible not only for innumerable personal tragedies—and comedies —but for the fall of dynasties and even the wreck of Empires.

"Christ" is reported as having said: "If I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto me." Interpret this in the light of the Cross as a Phallic emblem, and—how lurid a flash!

Compare AL II, 26. "I am the secret Serpent coiled about to spring: in my coiling there is joy. If I lift up my head, I and my Nuit are one. If I droop down mine head, and shoot forth venom, then is rapture of the earth, and I and the earth are one."

This versicle is deep, devilish deep; and it is chock-a-block with the mysteries of Fascination. Dig into this, dear sister! dig with your Qabalistic trowel; don't blame me if you don't get a Mandrake with the very first thrust!

But most certainly I shall say nothing here. Yes, indeed, nothing was ever more sternly forbidden than prattle on subjects like this! Look! It goes right on: "There is great danger in me; for who doth not understand these runes shall make a great miss. He shall fall down into the pit called Because, and there he shall perish with the dogs of Reason." (v. 27) The pit is of course the Abyss: see *The Vision and the Voice*, Xth Aethyr. A very sticky—or rather, unstuck! finish; so 'ware Hawk!

To business! Fascination No! Invisibility, is obviously penny plain S.A.

This is notably an affair of the subconscious; it often masters open dislike and distaste; it never yields to reason. It destroys all sense of values. Its origin is usually obscure. The least irrational base of it is the sense of smell. It was, if I remember rightly, the Comte de St. Germain who advised Loise de la Vallière to fix her exquisitely broidered kerchief in such wise that it protected her from contact with her saddle, and then, after a morning's hard gallop, to find an excuse for using it to wipe the brows of the perspiring king. It took him years to recover! The story is well known, and the plan widely adopted with remarkably unvarying success. But be careful not to overdo it; for if the source of the perfume is recognized the consciousness takes charge, and the result is antipathy.

Many years ago I composed a scent based on similar principles, which I intended to market under the title “Potted Sex Appeal.” We tried it out with the assistance of a certain noble Marquess, whose consequent misadventures—won't he laugh when he reads this!

But there are other senses: “*l'amour de l'oreille*” may refer not only to Othello's way of snaring Desdemona, but subtleties of timbre in the voice…

Yes, yes, you say impatiently, but there isn't any miracle about all this in the ordinary sense of the word.

True, but why the devil do you want me, so long as you're getting what you need? Just being childlike, I suppose! No? Merely that you can explain such matters to yourself well enough. All right; on to No. 2. Shall we look at levitation for a change?

This power—if it be one—is very curious indeed. It connects more directly with magnetism than almost any other. The first thing we think of when someone says “magnet” is picking up iron filings as a child.

Age before honesty! Let Father Poulain S.J. speak first! He is obliged to admit the phenomenon, because the Church has done so. But precisely similar accounts of the levitation of pagans and heretics must be according to him, lies, or Works of the Devil. As for the method, “God employs the angels to raise the saint, so as to avoid the necessity of intervening Himself.” Lazy old parishioner!

Now for a douche of common sense. Hatha-Yoga is quite clear and simple, even logical, about it. The method is plain Pranayama. Didn't I tell you onetime of the Four Stages of Success? 1. Perspiration—of a very special kind.— 2. Sukshma-Khumbakam: automatic rigidity. One stiffens like a dog in a bell-jar when you pump in Carbon Dioxide (is it?) 3. The Bhuchari-Siddhi, “jumping about like a frog.” One is wafted, without one's Asana being disturbed, about the floor, rather as fragments of paper, or dry leaves, might be in a slight draught under the door. 4. If one is quite perfectly balanced one cannot be moved sideways; so one rises. And there you are!

Personally, I reached the Bhuchari-Siddhi quite a number of times; but I never observed No. 4. On several occasions other people have seen me levitated, though never to a height of more than a foot or so. Here is the best account of such an incident, of those at my immediate disposal.

Nearly midnight. At this moment we stopped dictating, and began to converse. Then Fra. P. said: “Oh, if I could only dictate a book like the *Tao Teh King*!” Then he closed his eyes as if meditating. Just before I had noticed a change in his face, most extraordinary, as if he were no longer the same person; in fact, in the ten minutes we were talking he seemed to be any number of different people. I especially noticed the pupils of his eyes were so enlarged that the entire eye seemed black. (I tremble so and have such a quaking feeling inside, simply in thinking of last night, that I can't form letters). Then quite slowly the entire room filled with a thick yellow light (deep golden, but not brilliant. I mean not dazzling, but soft.) Fra. P. Looked like a person I had never seen but seemed to know quite well—his face, clothes and all were of the same yellow. I was so disturbed that I looked up to the ceiling to see what caused the light, but could only see the candles. Then the chair on which he sat seemed to rise; it was like a throne, and he seemed to rise; it was like a throne, and he seemed to be either dead or sleeping; but it was certainly no longer Fra. P. This frightened me, and I tried to understand by looking round the room; when I looked back the chair was raised, and he was still the same. I realized I was alone; and thinking he was dead or gone—or some other terrible thing—I lost consciousness.

This discourse has been thus left unfinished: but it is only necessary to add that the capacity to extract such spiritual honey from these unpromising flowers is the mark of an adept who has perfected his Magick Cup. This method of Qabalistic exegesis is one of he best ways of exalting the reason to the higher consciousness. Evidently it started Fra. P. so that in a moment he become completely concentrated and entranced.[2)]

Note that this has nothing at all to do with any Pranayama. It seems a matter of ecstatic concentration, which chose this mode of expression instead of bringing on Samadhi—though that, too, occurred in some of the cases.

By the way, there is a fairly full account of the whole business; I have just remembered—it is in my *Autohagiography*.

Pranayama produced, firstly, a peculiar kind of perspiration; secondly, an automatic rigidity of the muscles; and thirdly, the very curious phenomenon of causing the body, while still absolutely rigid, to take little hops in various directions. It seems as if one were somehow raised, possibly an inch from the ground, and deposited very gently a short distance away.

I saw a very striking case of this at Kandy. When Allan was meditating, it was my duty to bring his food very quietly (from time to time) into the room adjoining that where he was working. One day he missed two successive meals, and I thought I ought to look into his room to see if all was well. I must explain that I have known only two European women and three European men who could sit in the attitude called Padmasana, which is that usually seen in seated images of the Buddha. Of these men, Allan was one. He could knot his legs so well that, putting his hands on the ground, he could swing his body to and fro in the air between them. When I looked into his room I found him not seated on his meditation mat, which was in the centre of the room at the end farthest from the window, but in a distant corner ten or twelve feet off, still in his knotted position, resting on his head and right shoulder, exactly like an image overturned. I set him right way up, and he came out of his trance. He was quite unconscious that anything unusual had happened. But he had evidently been thrown there by the mysterious forces generated by Pranayama.

There is no doubt whatever about this phenomenon; it is quite common. But the Yogis claim that the lateral motion is due to lack of balance, and that if one were in perfect spiritual equilibrium one would rise directly in the air. I have never seen any case of levitation, and hesitate to say that it has happened to me, thought I have actually been seen by others, on several occasions, apparently poised in the air. For the first three phenomena I have found no difficulty in devising quite simple physiological explanations. But I can form no theory as to how the practice could counteract the force of gravitation, and I am unregenerate enough to allow this to make me sceptical about the occurrence of levitation. Yet, after all, the stars are suspended in space. There is no *à priori* reason why the forces which prevent them rushing together should not come into operation in respect of the earth and the body.

The Allan part of this is the best evidence at my disposal. He couldn't have got where he did by hopping, and he couldn't have got into that position intentionally; he must have been levitated, lost balance, and dropped upside down. In any case, there is no trace of fascination about it, as there may have been in Soror Virakam's observation.

About invisibility, now? Of this I have so much experience that the merest outline could take us far beyond the limits of a letter. In Mexico D.F., I worked at acquiring the power by means of ritual. I worked desperately hard. I got to the

point where my image in a pier-glass flickered, rather like the very earliest films did. Possibly more work, after more skill had come to me, might have done the whole trick. But I did not persist when I found out how to do it by fascination. (Here we are at last!)

Roughly, this is how to do it. If one is concentrated to the point when what you are thinking of is the only reality in the Universe, when you lose all awareness of who and where you are and what you are doing, it seems as though that unconsciousness were in some way contagious. The people around you just can't see anybody.

At one time, in Sicily, this happened nearly every day. Our party, strolling down to our bathing bay—the loveliest spot of its kind that I have ever seen—over a hillside where there wasn't cover for a rabbit, would lose sight of me, look, and fail to find me, though I was walking in their midst. At first, astonishment, bewilderment; at last, so normal had it become: “He's invisible again.”

One incident I remember very vividly indeed; an old friend and I were sitting opposite each other in armchairs in front of a large fire, smoking our pipes. Suddenly he lost sight of me, and actually cried out in alarm. I said: “What's wrong?” That broke the spell; there I was, all present and correct.

Did I hear you mutter “Transmutations? Werwolves? Golden Hawks?” Likely enough; it's time we touched on that.

In certain types of animal there appears, if tradition have any weight, to be a curious quality of—sympathy? I doubt if that be the word, but can think of none better—which enables them to assume at times the human form. No. 1—and the rest are also rans—is the seal. There is a whole body of literature about this. Then come wolves, hyaenas, large dogs of the hunting type; occasionally leopards. Tales of cats and serpents are usually the other way round; it is the human (nearly always female) that assumes these shapes by witchcraft. But in ancient Egypt they literally doted on this sort of thing. The papyri are full of formulas for operating such transmutations. But I think that this was mostly to afford some relaxation for the spirit of the dead man; he nipped out of his sarcophagus, and painted the town all the colours of the rainbow in one animal shape or another.

The only experience I have of anything of this sort was when I was in Pacific waters, mostly at Honolulu or in Nippon. I was practising Astral projection. A sister of the Order who lived in Hong Kong helped me. I was to visit her, and the

token of perfect success was to be that I should knock a vase off the mantel-piece. We appointed certain days and hours—with some awkwardness, as my time-distance from her was constantly growing shorter—for me to pay my visit. We got some remarkable results; our records of the interview used to tally with surprising accuracy; but the vase remained intact!

This is *not* one of my notorious digressions; and this is how transmutation comes into it. I found that by first taking the shape of a golden hawk, and resuming my own form after landing in her "temple"—a room she had fitted ad hoc—the whole operation became incomparably easier. I shall not indulge in hypotheses of why this should have been the case.

A little over four years later—in the meantime we had met and worked at Magick together—we resumed these experiments in a somewhat different form. The success was much greater; but though I could move her, and even any objects which she was touching, I could make no impression on inanimate objects at a distance from her. The behaviour of her dogs, and of her cat, was very curious and interesting. Strangest of all, there appeared those "kinks in Time" which profane science is just beginning to discuss. Example: on one occasion our records of an "interview" agreed with quite extraordinary precision; but, on comparing notes, it was found that owing to some stupid miscalculation of mine, it was all over in Hong Kong some hours before I had started from Honolulu! Again, don't ask me why, or how, or anything!

Talking of kinks in Time, I shall now maintain my aforesaid evil notoriety—the story is totally asynartete from fascinations of whatever variety—by recounting what is by far the most inexplicable set of facts that ever came my way.

In the summer of 1910 e.v. I was living at 125 Victoria Street, in a studio converted into a Temple by means of a Circle, an Altar and the rest. West of the Altar was a big fireplace with a fender settee; the East wall was covered with bookshelves. Enter the late Theodor Reuss, O.H.O. and Frater Superior of the O.T.O. He wanted me to join that Order. I recommended him, in politer language to repeat the Novocastrian Experiment. Undeterred, he insisted: "But you *must*."

(Now we go back, or forward, I know not which, to a night when I found myself stranded in London. I asked hospitality of a stranger; it was readily afforded. Some hours later my hostess fell asleep; I could not do so; something was nagging me. I suddenly took my notebook, and wrote a certain passage in a certain book, since published.)[3)]

"Must, my foot!" He persisted: "You have published the secret of the 9th degree of O.T.O., and you must take the corresponding oaths." "I have done nothing of the sort. I don't know the secret. I don't want to know it. I don't . . ." He interrupted me; he strode across the room; he plucked a book from the shelves; he opened it; he thrust it under my nose; he pointed out a passage with a minatory index. I began to stammer. "Yes, I wrote that. I don't know what it means; I don't like it; I only put it in because it was written in rather curious circumstances, and I was too lazy—or perhaps a little afraid—to reject it and write what I wanted." He fastened on one point: "*You don't know what it means*?" I repeated that I did not, even now that he had claimed it as important. He explained it to me, as to a child. I was merely surprised; it didn't sound possible. (Sister, all this while I've been lying to you like an Archbishop; it *is* connected with fascinations; indeed, it has very little to do with anything else!)

Finally, he won me over, I went down to his G.H.Q., took the Oaths, was installed in the Throne of the X° of O.T.O. as National Sovereign Grand Master General, and began to establish the Order as a going concern.

Well, you say, that is a very simple story, nothing specially hard to believe in it.

True, but consider the dates.

That scene in Victoria Street, is as clear and vivid in my mind, in every detail, as if it were yesterday. That secret is published only in that passage of that book. And—the book was not published until three years later, and from an address of which in 1910 I had not so much as thought of. The date of my adhesion to the O.T.O. (which, by the way, upset every principle and plan that I had ever held) is equally certain by virtue of subsequent published writings.[4)]

Now go away and explain that!

Well I've given you a fair account of some of the principal fascinations; as to the rest, bewitchments, sorceries, inhibitions and all that lot, it is enough if I say that they follow the regular Laws of Magick; in some, fascination proper plays a prominent part; in others, it is barely more than walking on to say "My lord, the carriage waits!" But—even that can be done well or ill, and a small mistake may work a mighty mischief.

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

1) A “Qabalistic” method of exegesis mentioned by Mathers in the introduction to Kabbalah Unveiled; it involves writing words backwards – T.S.

2) Book 4, part II: “An Interlude” (following the chapter on the Cup) – T.S.

3) The reference is generally believed to be to Chapter 36 of The Book of Lies, a.k.a. Liber XXXVI, the Star Sapphire – T.S.

4) The dates are not as hard to reconcile as Crowley maintains. While the first edition of The Book of Lies claims to have been published in 1913 (the second edition contains the strange remark “There is no joke or hidden meaning in the publisher's imprint”) it is advertised as “now ready” in the September 1912 Equinox. Since, according to the account in Confessions, Crowley was already a member of O.T.O. at the time of this alleged incident, Reuss having admitted him to the VII° after the Mathers versus the Equinox trial to spite Mathers and his claims to be head of the Rosicrucian Order, Crowley could be conflating two distinct visits by Reuss. Crowley's O.T.O. charter is dated April 1912 and he only began promoting his O.T.O. branch in the September 1912 Equinox – T.S.

Chapter 26

Mental Processes—Two Only are Possible

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

"Occult" science is the most difficult of them all. For one thing, its subject-matter includes the whole of philosophy, from ontology and metaphysics down to natural history. More, the most rarefied and recondite of these has a direct bearing upon the conduct of life in its most material details, and the simplest study of such apparently earthbound matters as botany and mineralogy leads to the most abstruse calculations of the imponderables.

With what weapons, then, are we to attack so formidable a fortress?

The first essential is clear thinking.

In a previous letter I have dealt to some extent with this subject; but it is so important that you must forgive me if I return to it, and that at length, from the outset, and in detail.

Let us begin but having our own minds clear of all ambiguities, ignoring for the purpose of this argument all metaphysical subtleties.[1)] I want to confine it to the outlook of the "plain man."

What do we do when we "think?"

There are two operations, and only two, possible to thought. However complex a statement may appear, it can always be reduced to a series of one or other of these. If not, it is a sham statement; nonsense masquerading as sense in the cloak of verbiage and verbosity.

Analysis, and Synthesis; or,

Subtraction, and Addition.

1. You can examine A, and find that it is composed of B and C. A = B + C.

2. You can find out what happens to B when you add C to it. B + C = A.

As you notice, the two are identical, after all; but the process is different.

Example: Raise Copper Oxide to a very high temperature; you obtain metallic copper and oxygen gas. Heat copper in a stream of oxygen; you obtain copper oxide.

You can complicate such experiments indefinitely, as when one analyzes coal-tar, or synthesizes complex products like quinine from its elements; but one can always describe what happens as a series of simple operations, either of the analytical or the synthetic type.

(I wonder if you remember a delightful passage in Anatole France where he interprets an "exalted" mystical statement, first by giving the words their meaning as concrete images, when he gets a magnificent hymn, like a passage from the *Rig-Veda*; secondly, by digging down to the original meaning, with an effect comical and even a little ribald. I fear I have no idea where to find it; in one of the "odds and ends" compilations most likely. So please, look somebody; you won't have wasted your time!)

This has been put in a sort of text, because the first stumbling-block to study is the one never has any certainty as to what the author means, or thinks he means, or is trying to persuade one that he means.

Try something simple: "The soul is part of God." Now then, when he writes "soul" does he mean Atma, or Buddhi, or the Higher Manas, or Purusha, or Yechidah, or Neschamah, or Nepheshch, or Nous, or Psyche, or Phren, or Ba, or Khu, or Ka, or Animus, or Anima, or Seele, or what?

As everybody, will he nill he, creates "God" in his own image, it is perfectly useless to inquire what he may happen to mean by that.

But even this very plain word "part." Does he mean to imply a quantitative assertion, as when one says sixpence is part of a pound, or a factor indispensable, as when one says "A wheel is part of a motor-car", or . . . (Part actually means "a share, that which is provided," according to Skeat; and I am closer to the place where Moses was when the candle went out than I was before!)

The fact is that very few of us know what words mean; fewer still take the trouble to enquire. We calmly, we carelessly assume that our minds are identical with that of the writer, at least on that point; and then we wonder that there should be misunderstandings!

The fact is (again!) that usually we don't really want to know; it is so very much easier to drift down the river of discourse, “lazily, lazily, drowsily, drowsily, In the noonday sun.”

Why is this so satisfactory? Because although we may not know what a word means, most words have a pleasant or unpleasant connotation, each for himself, either because of the ideas or images thus begotten, of hopes or memories stirred up, or merely for the sound of the word itself. (I have gone a month's journey out of my way to visit a town, just because I liked the sound of the name!)

Then there are devices: style—rhythm, cadence, rime, ornamentation of a thousand kinds. I think one may take it that the good writer makes use of such artifice to make his meaning clear; the bad writer to obscure it, or to conceal the fact that he has none.

One of the best items of the education system at the Abbey in Cefal was the weekly Essay. Everyone, including children of five or six, had to write on “The Housing Problem,” “Why Athens Decayed,” “The Marriage System,” “Buddhist Ethics” and the like; the subject didn't matter much; the point was that one had to discover, arrange and condense one's ideas about it, so as to present it in a given number of words, 93 or 156, or 418 as like as not, that number, neither more nor less. A superb discipline for any writer.

I had a marvellous lesson myself some years earlier. I had cut down a certain ritual of initiation to what I thought were the very barest bones, chiefly to make it easy to commit to memory.[2)] Then came a candidate who was deaf—not merely “a little hard of hearing;” his tympana were ruptured—and the question was How?

All right for most of it; one could show him the words typed on slips. But during part of the ceremony he was hoodwinked; one was reduced to the deaf-and-dumb alphabet devised for such occasions. I am as clumsy and stupid at that as I am at most things, and lazy, infernally lazy, on top of that. Well, when it came to the point, the communication of the words became abominably, intolerably tedious. And then! Then I found that about two-thirds of my “absolutely essential” ritual was not necesasary at all!

That larned 'im.[3)]

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

1) I mean criticisms such as “Definition is impossible;” “All arguments are circular;” “All propositions are tautological.” These are true, but one is obliged to ignore them in all practical discussions.

2) In accordance with my oaths I will not here comment on whether or not ritual officers in my experience have taken advantage of this – T.S.

3) Crowley has told this story already, in the letter on Noise – T.S.

Chapter 27

Structure of Mind Based on that of Body (Haeckel and Bertrand Russell)

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Was the sudden cloudburst at the end of my last letter somewhat of a surprise, and more that somewhat of a shock? Cheer up! The worst is yet to come.

This is where clean thinking—a subject whose fringes I seem to remember having touched—wins the Gold Medal of the Royal Humane Society.

It is surely the wise course to accept the plain facts; to try to explain them away, or to excuse them, is certain to involve one in a maelstrom of sophistry; and when, despite these laudable efforts, the facts jump up and land a short jab to the point, one is even worse off than before.

This has to be said, because Sammasati is assuredly one of the most useful, as well as one of the most trustworthy and most manageable, weapons in the armoury of the Aspirant.

You stop me, obviously with a demand for a personal explanation. "How is it," you write, "that you reject with such immitigable scorn the very foundation-stones of Buddhism, and yet refer disciples enthusiastically to the technique of some of its subtlest super-structures?"

I laff.

It is the old, old story. When the Buddha was making experiments and recording the results, he was on safe ground: when he started to theorize, committing

(incidentally) innumerable logical crimes in the process, he is no better a guesser than the Arahat next door, or for the matter of that, the Arahat's Lady Char.

So, if you don't mind, we will look a little into this matter of Sammasati: what is it when it's at home?

It may be no more than a personal fancy, but I think Allan Bennett's translation of the term, "Recollection," is as near as one can get in English. One can strain the meaning slightly to include Re-collection, to imply the ranging of one's facts, and the fitting of them into an organized structure. The term "sati" suggests an identification of Being with Knowledge—see The Soldier and the Hunchback: ! and ? (*Equinox* I, 1). So far as it applies to the Magical Memory, it lays stress on some such expedient, very much as is explained in Liber Thisarb (*Magick*, pp. 415 - 422).

But is it not a little strange that "The Abomination of Desolation should be set up in the Holy Place," as it were? Why should the whole-bearted search for Truth and Beauty disclose such hateful and such hideous elements as necessary components of the Absolute Perfection?

Never mind the why, for a moment; first let us be sure that it is so. Have we any grounds for expecting this to be the case?

We certainly have.

This is a case where "clean thinking" is most absolutely helpful. The truth is of exquisite texture; it blazons the escutcheon of the Unity of Nature in such delicate yet forceful colours that the Postulant may well come thereby to the Opening of the Trance of Wonder; yet religious theories and personal pernicketiness have erected against its impact the very stoutest of their hedgehogs of prejudice.

Who shall help us here? Not the sonorous *Vedas*, not the *Upanishads*, Not Apollonius, Plotinus, Ruysbroeck, Molinos; not any gleaner in the field of *à priori*; no, a mere devotee of natural history and biology: Ernst Haeckel.

Enormous, elephantine, his work's bulk is almost incredible; for us his one revolutionary discovery is pertinent to this matter of Sammasati and the revelations of one's inmost subtle structure.

He discovered, and he demonstrated, that the history of any animal throughout the course of its evolution is repeated in the stages of the individual. To put it crudely,

the growth of a child from the fertilized ovum to the adult repeats the adventures of its species.

This doctrine is tremendously important, and I feel that I do not know how to emphasize it as it deserves. I want to be exceptionally accurate; yet the use of his meticulous scientific terms, with an armoury of quotations, would almost certainly result in your missing the point, "unable to see the wood for the trees."

Let me put it that the body is formed by the super-position of layers, each representing a stage in the history of the evolution of the species. The foetus displays essential characteristics of insect, reptile, mammal (or whatever they are) in the order in which these classes of animal appeared in the world's history.

Now I want to put forward a thesis—and as far as I know it is personal to myself, based on my work at Cefal—to the effect that the mind is constructed on precisely the same lines.

You will remember from my note on "Breaks" in meditation how one's gradual improvement in the practice results in the barring-out of certain classes of idea, *by* classes. The ready-to-hand, recent fugitive thoughts come first and first they go. Then the events of the previous day or so, and the preoccupations of the mind for that period. Next, one comes to the layer of reveries and other forms of wish-phanstasm; then cryptomnesia gets busy with incidents of childhood and the like; finally, there intrudes the class of "atmospherics," where one cannot trace the source of the interruption.

All these are matters of the conscious rational mind; and when I explored and classified these facts, in the very first months of my serious practice of Yoga, I had no suspicion that they were no more than the foam on a glass of champagne: nay, rather of

"black wine in jars of jade
Cooled all these months in hoarded snow,
Black wine with purple starlight in its bosom,
Oily and sweet as the soul of a brown maid
Brought from the forenoon's archipelago,
Her brows bound bright with many a scarlet blossom
Like the blood of the slain that flowered free
When we met the black men knee to knee."

How apt the verses are! How close are wine and snow to lust and slaughter!

I have been digressing, for all that; let us return to our goats!

The structure of the mind reveals its history as does the structure of the body.

(Capitals, please, or bang on something; that has got to sink in.)

Just as your body was at one stage the body of an ape, a fish, a frog (and all the rest of it) so did that animal at that stage possess a mind correlative.

Now then! In the course of that kind of initiation conferred by Sammasati, the layers are stripped off very much as happens in elementary meditation (Dharana) to the conscious mind.

(There is a way of acquiring a great deal of strange and unsuspected knowledge of these matters by the use of Sulphuric Ether, $(C_2H_5)_2O$, according to a special technique. I wrote a paper on it once, 16 pp. 4{to}, and fearing that it might be lost had many copies made and distributed. Where is it? I must write you a letter one day.[1])

Accordingly, one finds oneself experiencing the thoughts, the feelings, the desires of a gorilla, a crocodile, a rat, a devil-fish, or what have you! One is no longer capable of human thoughts in the ordinary sense of the word; such would be wholly unintelligible.

I leave the rest to your imagination; doesn't it sound to you a little like some of the accounts of “The Dweller on the Threshold?”

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

1) This paper is still extant; I am unaware of details of publication. Internal evidence gives it an earliest possible date of 1920 – T.S.

Chapter 28

Need to Define “God”, “Self”, etc.

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Artless remark!***** Oh you!

Well, I suppose it's a gift—to stir Hell to its most abysmal horror with one small remark slipped in at the end. Scorpion!

“Higher self”—“God within us.”

Dear Lady, you could never have picked five words from Iroquois, or Banti, or Basuto or the Jargon of Master François Villon, or Pictish, which severally and together convey less to my mind.

No, no, not *Less*: I mean *More*, so much more that it amounts to nothing at all. Spencer Montmorency Bourbon Hohenstaufen sounds very exclusive and aristocratic, and even posh or Ritzy; but if you bestow these names upon every male child, the effect tends to diminish. The “Southern Gentleman” Lee Davis recently hanged for rape and murder, was not a near relation either of the General or the President: he was a Nigger.**1**

* Refers to a pious phrase at the end of her letter.

Gimme the old spade, I've got to go digging again.

1. Higher. Here we fall straight into the arms of Freud. Why “higher?” Because in a scrap it is easier to strangle him if you are on top. When very young children watch their parents *in actu coitus*, a circumstance exceedingly usual almost

anywhere outside England, and even here where houseroom is restricted, the infant supposes that his mother, upon whom he depends entirely for nourishment, is being attacked by the intrusive stranger whom they want him to address as "Dad." From this seed springs an "over-under complex," giving rise later on, in certain cases to whole legions of neuroses.

Now then make it a little clearer, please, just what you mean by "higher."

Skeat seems to connect it with hills, swellings, boils, the maternal breast; is that reason enough for us to connect it with the idea of advantage, or—"superiority" merely translates it into Latin!—worth, or—no, it's really too difficult. Of course, sometimes it has a "bad" meaning, as of temperature in fever; but nearly always it implies a condition preferable to "low."

Applied to the "self," it becomes a sort of trade name; nobody tells me if he means Khu, or Ba, or Khabs, or Ut of the *Upanishads* or Augoeides of the Neo-Platonists, or Adonai of Bulwer-Lytton, or — — here we are with all those thrice-accurs't alternatives. There is not, cannot be, any specific meaning unless we start with a sound skeleton of ontogenic theory, a well-mapped hierarchy of the Cosmos, and define the term anew.

Then why use it? To do so can only cause confusion, unless the context helps us to clarify the image. And that is surely rather a defeatist attitude, isn't it?

When I first set myself to put a name to my "mission"—the contemplation carried me half-way across South-West China—I considered these alternatives. I thought to cut the Gordian Knot, and call it by Abramelin's title the "Holy Guardian Angel" because (I mused) that will be as intelligible to the villagers of Pu Peng as to the most learned Pundits; moreover, the implied theory was so crude that no one need be bound by it.

All this is rubbish, as you will see when we reach the discussion on "self:" To explain now would lead to too unwieldy a digression.

2. "Within." If you don't mind, we'll tackle this now, while "higher" is fresh in our minds; for it is also a preposition. First you want to go up; then you want to go in. Why?

As "higher" gave the idea of aggression, of conquest, "within" usually implies safety. Always we get back to that stage of history when the social unit, based on the family, was little less than condition No. 1 of survival. The house, the castle,

the fortified camp, the city wall; the "gens," the clan, the tribe, the "*patrie*," to be outside means danger from cold, hunger and thirst, raiding parties, highway robbers, bears, wolves, and tigers. To go out was to take a risk; and, your labour and courage being assets to your kinsmen, you were also a bad man; in fact, a "bounder" or "outsider." "Debauch" is simply "to go out of doors!" St. John says: "without are dogs and sorcerers and whoremongers and adulterers and idolaters and…"—so on.**2**

We of Thelema challenge all this briskly. "The word of Sin is Restriction." (AL I, 41). Our formula, roughly speaking, is to go out and grab what we want. We do this so thoroughly that we grow thereby, extending our conception of "I" by including each new accretion instead of remaining a closely delineated self, proud of possessing other things, as do the Black Brothers.

We are whole-hearted extroverts; the penalty of restricting one*self* is anything from neurosis to down right lunacy; in particular, melancholia.

You ask whether these remarks do not conflict with my repeated definition of Initiation as the Way In. Not at all; the Inmost is identical with the All. As you travel inward, you become able to perceive all the layers which surround the "Self" from within, thus enlarging the scope of your vision of the Universe. It is like moving from a skirmishing patrol to G.H.Q.; and the object of so doing is obviously to exercise constantly increasing control over the whole Army. Every step in rank enables you both to see more and to do more; but one's attention is inevitably directed outward.

When the entire system of the Universe is conterminous with your comprehension, "inward" and "outward" become identical.

But it won't do at all to seek anything within but a point of view, for the simple reason that there is nothing else there!

It is just like all those symbols in *The Book of Thoth*; as soon as you get to the "end" of anything, you suddenly find it is the "beginning."

To formulate the idea of "self" at all, you must posit limitations; anything that is distinguishable is a mere temporary (and arbitrary) selection of the finite from the infinite; whatever you chose to think of, it changes, it grows, it disappears.

You have got to train your mind to canter through those leafy avenues of thought upon the good green turf of Indifference; when you can do it without conscious

effort, so that up-down, in-out, far-near, black-white (and so on for everything) appears quite automatically, you are already as near an Initiate as makes no matter.

3. “Self.” For a full discussion of this see Letter XLII.

4. “God.” This is really too bad of you!

Of all the hopelessly mangled words in the language, you settle with unerring Sadism on the most brutally butchered.

Crippen* was an amateur.

Skeat hardly helps us at all, except by warning us that “good” has nothing whatever to do with it.3 *Dieu* comes from Deus, with all its Sol-Jupiter references, and *Deos*, which Plato thought meant a runner; hence, Sun, Moon, Planets.

The best I can do for you, honest Injun! is the Russian word for god *Bog*; connected probably, though the Lithuanian, with the Welsh *Bwq* a spectre or hobgoblin. *Bugge*, too. Not very inspiring, is it, to replace the Old Hundredth by “Hush! Hush! Hush! here come the Bogey Man.” Or is it?

Enough of this fooling! Out, trusty rapier, and home to the stone heart of the audacious woman that wrote “God within us.”

I know you thought you knew more or less what you meant when you wrote it; but surely that was a mere slip. An instant's thought would have warned you that the word wouldn't stand even the most superficial analysis. You meant “Something which seems to me the most perfect symbol of all that I love, worship, admire”—all that class of verb.

But nobody else will have the same set of qualities in his private museum; you have, as every one has always done, made another God in your own image.

Then the Vedantists define God as “having neither quality nor quantity;” and some Yogis have a practice of setting up images to knock them down at once with “Not that! Not that!”

And the Buddhists won't admit any God at all in anything at all like the sense in which you use the word.†

What's worse, whatever you may mean by “God” conveys no idea to me: I can only guess by the light of my exceedingly small knowledge of you and your

general habits of thought and action. Then what sense was there in chucking it at my head? Half a brick would have served you better.

You think you can explain to me *viva voce*, perhaps? Don't you dare try! Whatever you said, I should prove to be nonsense, philosophically and in a dozen other ways. And the County Council Ambulance would bundle you off in your battered and bewildered débris to the Bug-house, as is so etymologically indicated.

Do see it simply; the word must in any event connote ideas of Neschamah, not of Ruach.

"But you use the word all the time." Yes, I do, and rely on the context to crystallize this most fluid—or gaseous—of expressions.

* Crippen was a famous English poisoner who was caught and hung.

† One of the most amusing passages of irony is to be found in *The Questions of King Milinda* where the Arhat Nagasena demolishes Maha Brahma.

5. "Us." Why "Us"?

Is this a reference to the Old School Tie, or that Finishing School in Brussels, and the ticket to the Royal enclosure at Ascot? I do not suppose for a moment that you meant it that way: but it's there. And so—

Anecdote of Lao-Tze.

The Old One was surrounded as usual by a galaxy of adoring disciples, and they were trying to get him to show them where the Tao was to be found.

It was in the Sun and Moon, he admitted; it was in the Son of Heaven and in the Superior Man. (Not George Nathaniel Curzon, however). It was in the Blossoms of Springtide, and in the chilling winds that swept over from Siberia, and in the Wild Geese that it bore Southward when their instinct bade them. In short, the catalogue began to look is if it were going to extend indefinitely; and an impatient disciple, pointing to certain traces left by a mule in its recent passage, asked: "And is the Tao also in that?" The Master nodded, and echoed: "Also in that."

Then what becomes of this privileged “us”? We are obliged to extend it to include everything. Then, as we have just seen, “God” also is unfettered by definitions.

Net result: “God within us” means precisely nothing at all.

And so it does, By Bradman!

“Bind nothing! Let there be no difference made among you between any one thing & any other thing; for thereby there cometh hurt. But whoso availeth in this, let him be the chief of all!” (AL I, 22 - 23)

I implore you not to point out that, this being the case, words like “hurt” and “chief” cannot possibly mean anything. The fact is that if we are to get on peaceably in the Club, we have to know when to take any given expression in a Pickwickian sense.

In the Ruach all the laws of logic apply: they don't in Neschamah.

The real meaning of the passage is simple enough, if you understand that it refers to a specific *result of Initiation*. You have to be able to reckon up the Universe, as a whole and in every part; and to get rid of all its false or partial realities by discarding everything but the One Reality which is the sole truth in, and of Illusion.

There is one set of equations which express the relation of the Perceiver and the Perceived, adjusted in accordance with the particular limitations on both sides; another cancels out all the finite terms, and leaves us with an ultimate $x = o = 0^0$.

See?

I know I'm a disheartening kind of bloke, and it does seem so unfriendly to jump down a fellow's throat every minute or so when she tries to put it ever so nicely, and it is so easy—isn't it?—to play the game of Sanctimonious Grandiloquence, and surely what was said was perfectly harmless, and . . . .

No, N.O., no: not harmless at all. My whole object is it train you to silence every kind of hypothetical speculation, and formulae both resonant and satisfying. I want you to—

abhor them
abominate them
despise them
detest them

eschew them
hate them
loathe them
and *da capo*.

and to get on with your *practice*. Then when you get the results, you can try, albeit uselessly, to fit your own words to the facts, if you should wish to communicate, for any good reason, your experiences to other people.

Then, despairing of your impotence, how glad you will be that you have been trained not to let anyone fob you off with phrases.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally yours,

666

1: Crowley sometimes carries his despite for euphemism to a point that obscures his purpose. The use of the term "nigger" here gives such offense to the modern reader that the point can be missed! This was not so in Crowley's youth, when this term was used without regard for its effect. For the record, "nigger" does not derive from "negro" = "black" but from "niggard" = "lazy." Crowley uses it here for the stereotype; but he also uses it deliberately to shock, as a lazy way to make such an effect. That makes Crowley a "nigger" at this point, as the word is properly defined! – WEH

2: Apocalpyse, XXII. 15.

3: Shipley's *Dictionary of Word Origins*sneaks the following in under the word "goodbye": "*God*, Goth. *guth*, may be traced to Aryan *ghut*, *god*, from *ghuto*, to implore: *God* is the one to whom we pray." "God" might also be a contraction of "Odin", as "'Od"—have the English speaking Christians been praying to the Aesir all this time? – WEH.

Chapter 29

What is Certainty?

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Well, I suppose I ought to have expected you to cock that wise left eyebrow at me! Right you are to wonder precisely what I mean by "certainty," in the light of:

> "On Soul's curtain
> Is written this one certainty, that naught is certain."

Then there is that chapter in *The Book of Lies* (again!)[1)]

The Chinese cannot help thinking that the Octave has five notes.

The more necessary anything appears to my mind, the more certain it is that I only assert a limitation.

I slept with Faith, and found a corpse in my arms on awaking; I drank and danced all night with Doubt, and found her a virgin in the morning.

I wouldn't start to argue with the Chinese, if I were you; they might remind you that you exude the stench peculiar to corpses.

Again, that other "Hymn to St. Thomas", as I ought perhaps to have called it:[2)]

Doubt.
Doubt Thyself.
Doubt even if thou doubtest thyself.
Doubt all
Doubt even if thou doubtest all.

It seems sometimes as if beneath all conscious doubt there lay some deepest certainty. O kill it! slay the snake!

The horn of the Doubt-Goat be exalted!

Dive deeper, ever deeper, into the Abyss of Mind, until thou unearth that fox THAT. On, hounds! Yoicks! Tally-ho! Bring THAT to bay!

Then, wind the Mort!

Once more—what a book that is: I never realized it until now! it says—see that double page at the onset, one with "?" and the other with "!" alone upon the blank. Moreover you should read the long essay The Soldier and the Hunchback: ! and? in the first volume and number of *The Equinox*.

But every one of those—rather significant, nich wahr?—slides into a rhapsody of exaltation, a dithyramb, a Paean.* No good here. For what you want is a penny plain pedestrian prose Probability-Percentage. You want to know what the Odds are when I say "certain."

A case for casuistry? At least, for classification. It depends rather on one's tone of voice? Yes, of course, and as to the classification, off we jog to the Divine Pymander, who saw, and stated, the quiddity of our query with his accustomed lucidity. He discerns three degrees of Truth; and he distinguishes accordingly:—

1. True
2. Certain without error
3. Of all truth.[3)]

Clear enough, the difference between 1 and 2: ask me the time, I say half-past two; and that's true enough. But the Astronomer Royal is by no manner of means satisfied with any approximation of that kind. He wants it accurate. He must know the longitude to a second; he must have decided what method of measuring time is to be used; he must make corrections for this and for that; and he must have attached an (arbitrary) interpretation to the system; the whole question of Relativity pops up. And, even so, he will enter a caveat about every single ganglion in the gossamer of his calculations.

* It seems natural to me—apodeictic after a fashion—to treat Doubt as positive, even aggressive. There is none of the wavering, wobbling, woebegone wail of the weary and bewildered wage-slave; it is a triumphant challenge, disagreement for its own sake. Irish!

Browing painted a quite perfect picture of my Doubt.

Up jumped Tokay on our table,
Like a pigmy castle-warder,
Dwarfish to see but stout and able,
Arms and accoutrement all in order;
And fierce he looked North, then wheeling South
Blew with his bugle a challenge to Drouth,
Cocked his flap-hat with the tosspot feather,
Twisted his thumb in his red moustache,
Jingled his huge brass spurs together,
Tightened his waist with its Buda Sash,
And then, with an impudence nought could abash
Shrugged his hump-shoulder, to tell the beholder,
For twenty such knaves he should laugh but the bolder;
And so, with his sword-hilt gallantly jutting,
And dexter hand on his haunch abutting,
Went the little man, Sir Ausbruch, strutting!

It's not the least bit like Tokay; rather the Bull's Blood its neighbor, or any rough strong red wine like Rioja. Curious, though, his making him a hunchbacked dwarf; there must be something in this deep down. I wonder what! (Ask Jung!)

Well then, all this intricate differentiation and integration and verification and Lord knows what leads at last to a statement which may be called “Certain without Error.”

Excuse me just a moment! When I was staying at the Consulate of Tengyueh, just inside the S.W. frontier of China, our one link with England, Home, and Beauty was the Telegraph Service from Pekin. One week it was silent, and we were anxious for news, our last bit of information having been that there was rioting in Shanghai, seventeen Sikh policemen killed. For all we knew the whole country might rise en masse at any moment to expel the “Foreign Devils.” At last the welcome messenger trotted across from the city in the twilight with a whole sheaf of telegrams. Alas, save for the date of dispatch, the wording in each one was identical: each told us that it was noon in Pekin!

They had to be relayed at Yung Chang, and both the operators had taken ten days off to smoke opium, sensible fellows!

But Hermes Trismegistus is not content with any such fugues as the Astronomer, however cunning and colossal his Organ; his Third Degree demands much more than this. The Astronomer's estimate has puttied every tiniest crack, he concedes it, but then waves it brusquely away: all the time the door is standing wide open!

The Astronomer's exquisitely tailored figure stands in abashed isolation, like a gawky young man at his first Ball; he feels that he doesn't belong. For this D.S.T., or Greenwich, or what not, however exact in itself, is so only in reference to some other set of measurements which themselves turn out to be arbitrary; it is not of any ultimate import; nobody can dispute it, but it simply doesn't matter to anybody, apart from the particular case. It is not "Of all Truth."

What Hermes means by this it will be well to enquire.

May we call it "a truth of *Religion*?" (Don't be shocked! The original word implies a binding-together-again, as in a "Body of Doctrine:" compare the word "Ligature." It was only later by corruption, that the word came to imply "piety;" re-ligens, attentive (to the gods) as opposed to neg-ligens, neglectful.)

I think that Hermes was contemplating a Ruach closely knitted together and anchored by incessant Aspiration to the Supernal Triad; just such an one, in short, as appears in those remarks on the Magical Memory, a God-man ready to discard his well-worn Instrument for a new one, bought up to date with all the latest improvements (the movement of the Zeitgeist during his past incarnation, in particular) well wrought and ready for his use.

This being so, a truth which is "of all Truth" should mean any proposition which forms an essential part of this Khu—this "Magical Identity" of a man.

Now how curious it must appear at the first glance to note that the truths of this order should prove to be what we call Axioms—or even Platitudes—

. . . . . What's that noise?

. . . . . I think I hear Sir Ausbruch!

And in full eruption too! And hasn't he the right? For all this time we've bluffed our way breezily ahead over the sparkling seas, oblivious of that very Chinese Chinese-puzzle that we started with, the paradox (is it?) of the Chinese Gamut.

(We shan't get into doldrums; there's always the way out from "?" to "!" as with any and every intellectual problem whatsoever: it's the only way. Otherwise, of course, we get to A is A, A is not-A, not-A is not-A, not-A is A, as is inevitable).

"The more certain I am of anything, the more certain it is that I am only asserting a limitation of my own mind."

Very good, but what am I to do about it? Some at least of such certainties must surely be "of all Truth." The test of admission to this class ought to be that, if one were to accept the contradictory of the proposition, the entire structure of the Mind would be knocked to pieces, as is not at all the case with the Astronomer's determination, which may turn out to be wrong for a dozen different reasons without anybody getting seriously wounded in his tenderest feelings.

The Statesman knows instinctively, or at worst, by his training and experience, what sort of assertion, harmless enough on the surface, may be "dangerous thinking," a death-blow to his own idea of what is "of all Truth," and strikes out wildly in a panic entirely justifiable from his own point of view. Exhibit No. 1: Galileo and that lot. What could it possibly matter to the Gospel story that people should think that the Earth moves round the Sun? (Riemann, and oh! such a lot of things, have shewn that it didn't and doesn't! This sort of "Truth" is only a set of conventions.)

"Oh, *don't* gas away like this! I want to know what to *do* about it. Am I to accept this cauerwauling Gamut, and enlarge my Mind, and call it an Initiation? Or am I to nail my own of-all-Truth Tonic Solfa to the Mast, and go down into the Maelstrom of Insanity with colours flying? Do you really need Massed Bands to lull Baby to sleep?

The Master of the Temple deals very simply and efficiently with problems of this kind. "The Mind" (says he) of this Party of the First Part, hereinafter referred to as Frater N (or whatever his 8° = 3° motto may be) is so constructed that the interval from C to C is most harmoniously divided into n notes; that of the Party of the Second Part hereinafter referred to as—*not* a Heretic, an Atheist, a Bolshie, a Die-hard, a Schismatic, an Anarchist, a Black Magician, a Friend of Aleister Crowley, or whatever may be the current term of abuse—Mr. A, Lord B, the Duke of C, Mrs. X, or whatever he or she may chance to be called—into five. The Structure called of-all-Truth in neither of us is affected in the least, any more than in the reading of a Thermometer with Fahrenheit on one side and Centigrade on the other.

You naturally object that this answer is little better than an evasion, that it automatically pushes the Gamut question outside the Charmed of-all-Truth Circle.

No, it doesn't really; for if you were able to put up a Projection of those two minds, there would be, firstly, some sort of compensation elsewhere than in the musical section; and secondly, some Truth of a yet higher order which is common to both.

Not unaware am I that these conceptions are at first exceedingly difficult to formulate clearly. I wouldn't go so far as to say that one would have to be a Master of the Temple to understand them; but it is really very necessary to have grasped firmly the doctrine that "a thing is only true insofar as it contains its contradiction in itself." (A good way to realize this is by keeping up a merry dance of paradoxes, such as infest Logic and Mathematics. The repeated butting of the head against a brick wall is bound in the long run to shake up the little grey cells (as Poirot[4] might say), teach you to distrust any train of argument, however apparently impeccable the syllogisms, and to seek ever more eagerly the dawn of that Neschamic consciousness where all these things are clearly understood, although impossible to express in rational language.)

The prime function of intellect is differentiation; it deals with marks, with limits, with the relations of what is not identical; in Neschamah all this work has been carried out so perfectly that the "rough working" has passed clean out of mind; just so, you say "I" as if it were an indivisible Unity, unconscious of the inconceivably intricate machinery of anatomical, physiological, psychological construction which issues in this idea of "I."

We may then with some confidence reaffirm that our certainties do assert our limitations; but this kind of limitation is not necessarily harmful, provided that we view the situation in its proper perspective, that we understand that membership of the of-all-Truth class does not (as one is apt to think at first sight) deepen the gulfs which separate mind from mind, but on the contrary put us in a position to ignore them. Our acts of "love under will," which express our devotion to Nuit, which multiply the fulfillments of our possibilities, become continually more efficacious, and more closely bound up with our Formula of Initiation; and we progressively become aware of deeper and vaster Images of the of-all-Truth class, which reconcile, by including within themselves, all apparent antinomies.

It is certain without error that I ought to go to bed.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

1) Chapter ME (45), “Chinese Music.”

2) Chapter NA (51), “Terrier-Works.”

3) This schema is, as far as I can tell, derived from a loose translation of the first line (or rather, preamble), of the “Emerald Tablet” a “Hermetic” writing believed to be of Alchemical significance (the earliest known copies are in Arabic). It is more usually rendered along the lines of “True without error, certain and most true.” I do not know the origins of the “of All Truth” reading – T.S.

4) A detective in sensational fiction of the period – T.S.

Chapter 30

Do you Believe in God?

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

You are quite right, as usual. True, we have gone over a great deal of the ground in various learned disquisitions of Gods, Angels, Elves, *et hoc genus omne*.

But God with a capital "G" in the singular is a totally different pair of Blüchers—*nicht wahr*?

Let me go back just for a moment to the meaning of "belief." We agreed that the word was senseless except as it implies an opinion, instinct, conviction—what you please!—so firmly entrenched in our natures that we act automatically as if it were "true" and "certain without error," perhaps even "of the essence of truth."[1] (Browning discusses this in *Mr. Sludge the Medium*.) Good: the field is clear for an enquiry into this word God.

We find ourselves in trouble from the start.

We must define; and to define is to limit; and to limit is to reduce "God" to "*a* God" or at best "*the* God."

He must be omniscient (Mercury) omnipotent, (Sulphur) and omnipresent (Salt);[2] yet to such a Being no *purpose* would be possible; so that all the apologies for the existence of "evil" crash. If there be opposites of any kind, there can be no consistency. He cannot be Two; He must be One; yet, as is obvious, he isn't.

How do the Hindu philosophers try to get out of this quag? "Evil" is "illusion;" has no "real" existence. Then what is the point of it?

They say "Not that, not that!" denying to him all attributes; He is "that which is without quantity or quality." They contradict themselves at every turn; seeking to remove limit, they remove definition. Their only refuge is in "superconsciousness." Splendid! but now "belief" has disappeared altogether; for the word has no sense unless it is subject to the laws of normal thought… Tut! you

must be feeling it yourself; the further one goes, the darker the path. All I have written is somehow muddled and obscure, maugre my frenzied struggle for lucidity, simplicity . . . .

Is this the fault of my own sophistication? I asked myself. Tell you what! I'll trot round to my masseuse, and put it up to her. She is a simple country soul, by no means over-educated, but intelligent; capable of a firm grasp of the principles of her job; a steady church-goer on what she considers worthwhile occasions; dislikes the rector, but praises his policy of keeping his discourse within bounds. She has done quite a lot of thinking for herself; distrusts and despises the Press and the Radio, has no use for ready-made opinions. She shares with the flock their normal prejudices and phobias, but is not bigoted about them, and follows readily enough a line of simply-expressed destructive criticism when it is put to her. This is, however, only a temporary reaction; a day later she would repeat the previous inanities as if they had never been demolished. In the late fifties, at a guess. I sprang your question on her out of the blue, à la "doodle-bug;" premising merely that I had been asked the question, and was puzzled as to how to answer it. Her reply was curious and surprising: without a moment's hesitation and with great enthusiasm, "Quickly, yes!" The spontaneous reservation struck me as extremely interesting. I said: of course, but suppose you think it over—and out—a bit, what am I to understand? She began glibly "He's a great big—" and broke off, looking foolish. Then, although omnipotent, He needed our help—we were all just as powerful as He, for we were little bits of each other—but exactly how, or to what end, she did not make clear. An exclamation: "Then there is the Devil!"

She went on without a word from me for a long while, tying herself up into fresh knots with every phase. She became irreverent, then downright blasphemous; stopped short and began to laugh at herself. And so forth—but, what struck me as curious and significant, in the main her argument followed quite closely the lines which came naturally to me, at the beginning of this letter!

In the end, "curiouser and curiouser," she arrived at a practically identical conclusion: she believed, but what she believed in was Nothing!

As to our old criterion of what we imply in practice when we say that we believe, she began by saying that if we "helped" God in His mysterious plan, He would in some fashion or other look after us. But about this she was even more vague than in the matter of intellectual conviction; "helping God" meant behaving decently according to one's own instinctive ideas of what "decently" means.

It is very encouraging that she should have seen, without any prompting on my part, to what a muddle the question necessarily led; and very nice for me, because it lets me out, cara soror!

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

P.S. I thought it a good plan to put my fundamental position all by itself in a postscript; to frame it. My observation of the Universe convinces me that there are beings of intelligence and power of a far higher quality than anything we can conceive of as human; that they are not necessarily based on the cerebral and nervous structures that we know; and that the one and only chance for mankind to advance as a whole is for individuals to make contact with such Beings.

1) Crowley is alluding to the preamble to the "Emerald Tablet of Hermes" which is more usually translated along the lines of: "True, without error (or "falsehood"), certain and most true." – T.S.

2) The original had the symbols for alchemical mercury, sulphur and salt.

Chapter 31

Religion - Is Thelema a “New Religion”?

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

“Would you describe your system as a new religion?” A pertinent question, you doubtless suppose; whether it may happen to mean anything is—is—is—well, is what we must try to make clear.

True, it's a slogan of A∴ A∴ “The method of science—the aim of religion.” Here the word “aim” and the context help the definition; it must mean the attainment of Knowledge and Power in spiritual matters—or words to that effect: as soon as one selects a phrase, one starts to kick holes in it! Yet we both know perfectly well all the time what we do mean.

But this is certainly not the sense of the word in your question. It may clear our minds, as has so often happened, if we examine it through the lens of dear old Skeat.

Religion, he says, Latin: *religio*, piety. Collection or paying attention to: *religens* as opposed to *negligens*, neglecting; the attitude of Gallio. But it also implies a binding together i.e. of ideas; in fact, a “body of doctrine.” Not a bad expression. A religion then, is a more or less coherent and consistent set of beliefs, with precepts and prohibitions therefrom deducible. But then there is the sense in which Frazer (and I) often use the word: as in opposition to “Science” or “Magic.” Here the point is that religious people attribute phenomena to the will of some postulated Being or Beings, placable and moveable by virtue of sacrifice, devotion, or appeal. Against such, the scientific or magical mind believes in the Laws of Nature, asserts “If A, then B”—if you do so-and-so, the result will be so-and-so, aloof from arbitrary interference. Joshua, it is alleged, made the sun stand still by supplication, and Hezekiah in the same way cause it to “go back upon the dial of

Ahaz;" Willett did it by putting the clock back, and getting an Act of Parliament to confirm his lunacy. Petruchio, too "It shall be what o'clock I say it is!" The two last came close to the magical method; at least, to that branch of it which consists of "fooling all the people all the time." But such an operation, if true Magick were employed, would be beyond the power of any magician of my acquaintance; for it would mess up the solar system completely. (You remember how this happened, and what came of it, in a rather clever short story by H.G. Wells.) For true Magick means "to employ one set of natural forces at a mechanical advantage as against another set"—I quote, as closely as memory serves, Thomas Henry Huxley, when he explains that when he lifts his water-jug—or his elbow—he does not "defy the Law of Gravitation." On the contrary, he uses that Law; its equations form part of the system by which he lifts the jug without spilling the water.

To sum up, our system is a religion just so far as a religion means an enthusiastic putting-together of a series of doctrines, no one of which must in any way clash with Science or Magick.

Call it a new religion, then, if it so please your Gracious Majesty; but I confess that I fail to see what you will have gained by so doing, and I feel bound to add that you might easily cause a great deal of misunderstanding, and work a rather stupid kind of mischief.

The word does not occur in *The Book of the Law*.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

Chapter 32

How can a Yogi ever be Worried?

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

That question I have been expecting for a very long time! And what *you* expect is to see my middle stump break the wicket-keeper's nose, with the balls smartly fielded by Third Man and Short Leg!

I admit that it looks like a strong case. Here (you put it in your more elegant prose) we have a Yogi, nay more, a Paramahamsa, a Bodhisattva of the best: yea, further, we have a Master of the Temple—and is not his Motto "*Vi veri vniversom vivus vici*?" and yet we find him fussing like an old hen over the most trivial of troubles; we find him wrapped in the lacustrine vapours of Avernus, fretting himself into a fever about imaginary misfortunes at which no normal person would do more than cast a contemptuous glance, and get on with the job.

Yes, although you can scarcely evade indictment for unnecessarily employing the language of hyperbole, I see what you mean. Yet the answer is adequate; the very terms of his Bargain with Destiny not only allow for, but imply, some such reaction on the part of the Master to the Bludgeonings of Fate. (W. E. Henley[1])

There are two ways of looking at the problem. One is what I may call the mathematical. If I have ten and sixpence in the world and but a half-guinea cigar, I have no money left to buy a box of matches. To "snap out of it" and recover my normal serenity requires only a minute effort, and the whole of my magical energy is earmarked for the Great Work. I have none left to make that effort. Of course, if the worry is enough to interfere with that Work, I must detail a corporal's file to abate the nuisance.

The other way may be called the Taoist aspect. First, however, let me explain the point of view of the Master of the Temple, as it is so similar. You should

remember from your reading what happens in this Grade. The new Master is "cast out" into the sphere appropriate to the nature of his own particular Great Work. And it is proper for him to act in true accordance with the nature of the man as he was when he passed through that Sphere (or Grade) on his upward journey. Thus, if he be cast out into 3° = 8°, it is no part of his work to aim at the virtues of a 4° = 7°; all that has been done long before. It is no business of his to be bothering his head about anything at all but his Work; so he must react to events as they occur in the way natural to him without trying to "improve himself." (This, of course, applies not only to worry, but to all his funny little ways.)

The Taoist position differs little, but it is independent of all considerations of the man's attainment; it is an universal rule based on a particular theory of things in general. Thus, "benevolence and righteousness" are not "virtues;" they are only symptoms of the world-disease, in that they should be needed. The same applies to all conditions, and to all modes of seeking to modify them. There is only one proper reaction to event; that is, to adjust oneself with perfect elasticity to whatever happens.

That tiger across the paddy-field looks hungry. There are several ways of dealing with the situation. One can run away, or climb a tree, or shoot him, or (in *your* case) cow him by the Power of the Human Eye; but the way of the Tao is to take no particular notice. (This, incidentally, is not such bad Magick; the diversion of your attention might very well result in your becoming invisible, as I have explained in a previous letter.) The theory appears to be that, although your effort to save yourself is successful, it is bound to create a disturbance of equilibrium elsewhere, with results equally disastrous. Even more so; it might be that to be eaten by a tiger is just what you needed in your career through the incarnations; at that moment there might well be a vacancy somewhere exactly where it will do most good to your Great Work. When you press on one spot, you make a corresponding bulge in another, as we often see a beautiful lady, unhappy about her waist-line, adopt drastic measures, and transform herself into the semblance of a Pouter Puffin!

In theory, I am particularly pleased about this Method, because it goes for everybody, requires no knowledge, no technical training, "no nuffin." All the same, it won't do for me, except in a much modified form, and in very special cases; because no course of action (or inaction) is conceivable that would do great violence to my nature.

So let me worry along, please, with the accent on the “along;” I will grin and bear it, or, if it gets so bad that I can't do my Work, I will make the necessary effort to abate the nuisance, always most careful to do as little damage as possible to the main current of my total Energy.

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

1) An English poet.

Chapter 33

The Golden Mean

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

You would think that one who like myself has the Sun, the Lord of His Horoscope, in Libra, with Venus who rules that sign in close conjunction with him, with Saturn trine, Uranus sextile, Mars square and Luna quincunx to him, would wear the Golden Mean as a breastplate, flaunt it on my banneret, quarter it on my escutcheon, and grave it on the two-edged blade of my thrice trusty falchion!

Just so, objects that instinct itself! "Had you been born a few hours earlier, with Aries rising, its lord Mars aggravated by the square of Sol and Venus, you would indeed have been a Wild Man of the Woods, arrogant, bigoted, domineering, incapable of seeing a second side to any question, headstrong, haughty, a seething hell-broth of hate; and this fact disables your judgment."

All perfectly true. My equable nature is congenitally hostile to extreme measures, except in imagination. I cannot bear sudden violent movements. Climbing rocks, people used to say that I didn't climb them, that I oozed over them!

This explains, I think, my deep-seated dislike of many passages in The Book of the Law. "O prophet! thou hast ill will to learn this writing. I see thee hate the hand & the pen; but I am stronger." (AL II, 10-11)

Well, what is the upshot of all this? It answers your question about the value to be attached to this Golden Mean. There is no rule about it; your own attitude is proper for yourself, and has no value for anybody else. But you must make sure exactly what that attitude actually is, deep down.

Let us go back for a moment to the passage above quoted. The text goes on to give the reason for the facts. "Because of me in Thee which thou knewest not. for why? Because thou wast the knower, and me." (AL II, 12-13) The unexpected use or disuse of capitals, the queer syntax, the unintelligibility of the whole passage: these certainly indicate some profound Qabalistic import in these texts.

So we had better mark that Strictly Private, and forget it.

One point, however, we have forgotten: although my Libra inclinations do bias me personally, they also make me fair-minded, “a judge, and a good judge too” in the memorable phrase of the late William Schwenk Gilbert. So I will sum up what is to be said for and against this Golden Mean.

As usual, nobody has taken the trouble to define the term. We know that it was extolled by both the Greek and the Chinese philosophers; but I cannot see that they meant much more than to counsel the avoidance of extremes, whether of measures or of opinions; and to advocate moderation in all things.

James Hilton has a most amusing Chinese in his *Lost Horizon*. When the American 100% he-man, mixer, joiner, and go-getter, agrees with him about broadmindedness in religious beliefs, and ends “and I'm dead sure you're right!” his host mildly rebukes him, saying: “But we are only moderately sure.” Such thought plumbs the Abysses of Wisdom; at least, it may quite possibly do so. Forgive me if I emulate the teacher!

But this is not as simple as it sounds. There is great danger in this Golden Mean, one of whose main objects is to steer clear of shipwreck, Scylla being as fatal as Charybdis. No, this lofty and equable attitude is worse than wrong unless it derives from striking the balance between two very distant opposites. One of the worst perils of the present time is that, in the reaction against ignorant bigotry, people no longer dare to make up their minds about anything. The very practice, which the A∴ A∴ so strongly and persistently advocates, tends to make people feel that any positive attitude or gesture is certainly wrong, whatever may be right. They forget that the opposite may, *within the limit of the universe of discourse*, amount to nothing.

They fall into flabbiness.

I avoid this—see the example at the very outset of this letter—by saying: “Yes, I hate so-and-so like hell; I want to exterminate the very memory of the bastard from the earth, after I have personally superintended having him 'Seven years a-killing' winding up by hanging, disembowelling, and quartering him. But of course I'm not necessarily right about this in any sense; it is merely that I happened to be born the kind of man that feels like that!”

Of course, in no case does the Golden Mean advise hesitating, trimming, hedging, compromising; the very object of ensuring an exact balance in your weapon is that its blow may be clean and certain.

You know how all our faults love to disguise themselves as virtues; very often, as what our neighbours call virtues, not what we ourselves think them. We are all ashamed to be ourselves; and this is sheer, stark stultification. For we *are* ourselves; we cannot get away from it; all our hypocrisies and shams are just as much part of ourselves as what we like to think is the real man. All that we do when we make these pretenses is to set up internal strain and conflict; there is nothing objective in it. Instead of adding to our experience, which is the Great Work, we shut ourselves up in this citadel of civil turmoil; it is the Formula of the Black Brothers.

The Golden Mean is more valuable as the extremes which it summarizes are distant from each other; that is the plain mechanics of the lever. So don't pay too much attention to these remarks; they are no more than the quiet fireside reflections of a man who has spent all his life breaking records. The Golden Mean at its best can only keep you from extravagant blunders; it will never get you anywhere.

The Book of the Law constantly implies a very different policy; listen to its climax-exhortation:

"But exceed! exceed!" (AL II, 71)

Remember that which is written: "Moderate strength rings the bell: great strength returns the penny." It is always the little bit extra that brings home the bacon. It is the last attack that breaks through the enemy position. Water will never boil, however long you keep it at 99° C. You may find that a Pranayama cycle of 10-20-30 brings no result in months; put it up to 10-20-40, and Dhyana comes instantly. When in doubt, push just a little bit harder. You have no means of finding out what are exactly the right conditions for success in any practice; but all practices are alike in one respect; the desired result is in the nature of orgasm.

I guess that's about what I think.

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

Chapter 34

The Tao [I]

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

This is the hardest question you have yet put to me: to explain the Tao. The only proper answer would be Silence, trusting to the slow dispersion and absorption of the disturbance created by your asking it. In that sentence there lies, really, the whole explanation; but I see well enough that it won't do for you. You are not yet old or wise enough to understand that the only way to clear muddy water is to leave it alone. Still, you doubtless expect me to tell you just how that comes to pass; I will not disappoint you. First of all, what is the Tao? No proposed equivalent in any other language comes within a billion light-years of giving even an approximation. For one thing, it is itself a paradox; for another, it has several meanings which are apparently quite distinct. For instance, one sinologist calls it "Reason"; another, "The Way"; another "Tat" or "Shiva." These are all true in one sense or another. My own "White Hope" (see *The Book of Thoth*) is to identify it with the Qabalistic Zero. This last attribution is useful, as I will show presently, for hard practical reasons; it is an assumption which indicates the method of the Old Wise One who approaches the Tao.

As you know, the supreme classic of this subject, is the *Tao Teh King*; and I must suppose that you have read this in at least one of the several translations, else I should have to start by pushing my own version at you. (This has been ready for a quarter of a century, and I seem to be unable to get it printed!) None of these published translations, learned and admirable though they may be as such, can be of use except to familiarize you with the terminology; for not one of these scholars has the most nebulous idea of that Laotze was talking about. I can hardly hope to emphasize sternly enough how deep and wide is the "Great Gulf fixed" between the initiate and the profane, when questions of this kind are on the Magic Carpet. Suppose you were transported (on that Carpet!) to a planet where the highest means of reproduction was germination; try to make the denizens understand Catullus, Shelley, Rossetti, or Emily Brontë! It is, honestly, quite as

bad as that. How can anyone grasp the idea of perfect and absolute negation being at the same time the sole motive force of all that exits?

"Tao hath no will to work;
But by its influence even
The Moon and Sun rejoice to run
Among the starry Seven."

King Kang K*hang*.[1)]

The Book of the Law states the doctrine of Tao very succinctly: "…thou hast no right but to do thy will. Do that, and no other shall say nay. For pure will, unassuaged of purpose, delivered from the lust of result, is every way perfect." (AL I, 42-44)

"Thus also the Sage, seeking not any goal, attaineth all things; he does not interfere in the affairs of his body, and so that body acteth without friction. It is because he meddleth not with his personal aims that these come to pass with simplicity." *Tao Teh* K*ing*, VII, 2.

The ideal analogy seems to be that of a planet in its orbit. It has its "true motion;" it meets the minimum of friction from circumambient space. When it suffers the attraction of another body, it sways slightly to make the proper adjustment without effort or argument; it can, consequently, continue indefinitely in its orbit.

This is roughly the plan of the Taoist in his attitude to life. Having ascertained the Path which satisfies the equations of his Nature (as we say, "found his True Will") he continues "without lust of result," acting only when it happens to be necessary to adjust himself to any external stress that affects him, and so proceeds happily

"thinking of a way
To feed oneself on batter,
And so go on from day to day
Getting a little fatter."

—assuming that his "True Will" is of that variety. Basil King Lamus asserts this in *The Diary of A Drug Fiend* when he says: "If I were a dog, I should bark; if I were an owl, I should hoot." It is rather like the pattern in the game of dominoes; you put the card that matches. No other consideration comes into it at all.

It is the extreme simplicity of this idea which baffles people's minds, and the universal quality of impatience which makes everybody fidget, and so injure the delicacy of the "fine adjustment" which is the essence of the work.

When I used to climb rocks, I never jumped, I never grabbed, I never made a sudden or a violent movement; therefore, with thin smooth arms like a young girl's, and legs, tough enough it is true but always slow and steady, I used to find myself at the top of pitches that had beaten all the gymnasts.

In every sport worth the name one may observe similar facts. Consider the delicacy required for big breaks at billiards; the problem is always to secure favourable readjustment with a minimum of disturbance. Of course, there are positions which demand drastic treatment; but that is the best evidence that the balls have got into the worst possible mess from your point of view. But it was an exquisitely delicate "safety shot" that got them like that. True, there are games in which brute force is the way to victory; but such games never make progress in themselves. The "tug-of-war" or "tossing the caber" are exactly as they were fifty—or five hundred—years ago. Contrast the advance in "positional" chess!

Oh yes, this is all old stuff! Of course it is; but it remains a useful sort of basis for meditation when you are seeking to understand one aspect of the Way of he Tao.

Anyhow (you protest) this is getting away from the question as to what Tao actually *is*. Good; but I want you to abstain from trying to make an intellectual image of it, still less to visualize it. I tried at one time to do something of the sort with the *Fourth Dimension*:[2] Hinton gives a practice involving complex patterns of cubes; and I was never able to make anything of it.

As I said above, it is a matter of Neschamah; but what follows may help you.

Why is the Tao translated "Reason"? Because by "Reason" is here meant the structure of the mind itself; a Buddhist who had succeeded with Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna might call it the Consciousnesss of the Tendency to Perceive the Sensation of Anything. For in the last resort, and through the pursuit of one line of analysis, this structure is all that we can call our consciousness. Everything of which we can in any way be aware may be interpreted as being some function of this structure.

Note! *Function*. For now we see why Tao may also be translated "The Way"; for it is the *motion* of the structure that we observe. There is no Being apart from Going.

You are familiar with the Four Powers of the Sphinx, attributed by the Adepts of old time to their Four Elements. Air is to Know, Scire; Fire is to Will, Velle; Water is to Dare, Audere; and Earth is to Keep Silence, Tacere. But now that a fifth Element, spirit, is generally recognized in the Qabalah, I have deemed it proper to add a Fifth Power corresponding: to Go, Ire. (*Book of Thoth*, p. 275)[3)]

Then, as Spirit is the Origin, the Essence, and the Sum of the other four, so is to Go in relation to those powers. And to Go is the very meaning of the name God, as elsewhere shewn in these letters; hence the Egyptian Gods were signalized as such by their bearing the Ankh, which is a Sandal-strap, and in its form the Crux Ansata, the Rosy Cross, the means whereby we demonstrate the Godhead of our Nature. See then how sweetly each idea slides into the next! How *right* this is, that the Quintessence should be dynamic and not static! For if there were some form of Being separate from Going, it would necessarily be subject to decay; and, in any case, a thing impossible to apprehend, since apprehension is itself an Act, not an idea immobile which would be bound to change in the very moment of grasping it.

As I have tried to shew in another letter, the "Point-Event" (or whatever it is) of which we are *aware* is a change, or, less inaccurately, the memory of one; the things that change remain relentlessly unknown.

It does seem to me, young woman, that you ought to go over these ideas again and again, familiarizing yourself intimately with this process of passing from one to another, so intimately that it becomes automatic and spontaneous for you to run round the circle in perfectly frictionless ease; for otherwise your mind will be for ever pestering you all your life, and even your conscience reproaching you; they will say "But you have never got a definite answer to any single one of your original questions." We are all—most of us, anyhow—born with this hankering after the definite; it is our weakness that yearns for repose. We do not see that this is death; if any of these answers could be cut off short and neatly trimmed with paper frills like a ham, it would no longer be even an approximation to truth.

I am quite sure that this is the Doctrine of the Tao, and of opinion that no other body of teaching puts forward its thought more clearly or more simply.

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

1) The Khing Kang King, or “Classic of Purity” is a short Taoist writing attributed to one Ko Yüan (or Hsüan); an English translation by James Legge appeared as an appendix to the two volumes of Taoist texts in the “Sacred Books of the East” series. While he was in America between 1914 and 1919 Crowley wrote a poetic paraphrase which he designated Liber XXI. The verse quoted was originally translated by Legge as “The Great Tâo has no passions, but It causes the sun and moon to revolve as they do.” I do not currently have access to any modern translations – T.S.

2) The Fourth Dimension by C.H. Hinton; London, 1884; facsimile reprint by Kessinger available – T.S.

3) The initials of the five “powers” in the Latin language thus form the initials of Sub Umbra Alarum Tuarum, Iehova (or Isis). Compare the concluding prayer of the Fama Fraternitatis – T.S.

Chapter 35

The Tao [II]

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

You are only one of a number of people who are interested in my translation of the *Tao Teh King*. Naturally, I want to publish it; but so many other things come first. So I am sending you the Introduction, in the hope that it will stimulate that interest to the point of getting some other publisher to give it sea-room.[1)]

I bound myself to devote my life to Magick at Easter 1898 (era vulgari) and received my first initiation on November 18 of that year.

My friend and climbing companion, Oscar Eckenstein, gave me my first instructions in learning the control of the mind early in 1901, in Mexico City. Shri Parananda, Solicitor General of Ceylon, an eminent writer upon, and teacher of, Yoga from the orthodox Shaivite standpoint, and Bhikkhu Ananda Metteya, (Allan Bennett) the great English Adept, who was one of my earliest instructors in Magick, and joined the Sangha in Burma in 1902, gave me my first groundings in mystical theory and practice. I spent some months of 1901 in Kandy, Ceylon with the latter, until success crowned my work.

I also studied all varieties of Asiatic philosophy, especially with regard to the practical question of spiritual development, the Sufi doctrines, the *Upanishads*, the *Sankhra*, *Veda* and *Vedanta*, the *Bhagavad-Gita* and *Purana*, the *Dammapada*, and many other classics, together with numerous writings on the Tantra and Yoga of such men as Patanjali, Vivekananda, etc., etc. Not a few of these teachings are as yet wholly unknown to scholars. I made the scope of my studies as comprehensive as possible, omitting no school of thought however unimportant or repugnant.

I made a critical examination of all these teachers in the light of my practical experience. The physiological and psychological uniformity of mankind guaranteed that the diversity of expression concealed a unity of significance. This

discovery was confirmed, furthermore, by reference to Jewish, Greek, and Celtic traditions. One quintessential truth was common to all cults, from the Hebrides to the Yellow Sea; and even the main branches proved essentially identical. It was only the foliage that exhibited incompatibility.

When I walked across China in 1905-6, I was fully armed and accoutred by the above qualifications to attack the till-then-insoluble problem of the Chinese conception of religious truth. Practical studies of the psychology of such Mongolians as I had met in my travels, had already suggested to me that their acentric conception of the universe might represent the correspondence in consciousness of their actual psychological characteristics. I was therefore prepared to examine the doctrines of their religious and philosophic Masters without prejudice such as had always rendered nugatory the efforts of missionary sinologists; indeed, all oriental scholars with the single exception of Rhys Davids. Until his time, translators had invariable assumed, with absurd naivété, or (more often) arrogant bigotry, that a Chinese writer must be putting forth either a more or less distorted and degraded variation of some Christian conception, or utterly puerile absurdities. Even so great a man as Max Müller, in his introduction to the *Upanishads*, seems only half inclined to admit that the apparent triviality and folly of many passages in these so-called sacred writings might owe their appearance to our ignorance of the historical and religious circumstances, a knowledge of which would render them intelligible.

During my solitary wanderings among the mountainous wastes of Yun Nan, the spiritual atmosphere of China penetrated my consciousness, thanks to the absence of any intellectual impertinences from the organ of knowledge. The *Tao Teh* K*ing* revealed its simplicity and sublimity to my soul, little by little, as the conditions of my physical, no less than of my spiritual life, penetrated the sanctuaries of my spirit. The philosophy of Lao Tze communicated itself to me, in despite of the persistent efforts of my mind to compel it to conform with my preconceived notions of what the text must mean. This process, having thus taken root in my innermost intuition during those tremendous months of wandering Yun Nan, grew continually throughout succeeding years. Whenever I found myself able once more to withdraw myself from the dissipations and distractions which contact with civilization forces upon a man, no matter how vigorously he may struggle against their insolence, to the sacred solitude of he desert, whether among the sierras of Spain or the sands of the Sahara, I found that the philosophy of Lao

Tze resumed its sway upon my soul, subtler and stronger on each successive occasion.

But neither Europe nor Africa can show any such desolation as America. The proudest, stubbornest, bitterest peasant of deserted Spain, the most primitive and superstitious Arab of the remotest oases, are a little more than kin and never less than kind at their worst; whereas in the United States one is almost always conscious of an instinctive lack of sympathy and understanding with even the most charming and cultured people. It was therefore during my exile in America that the doctrines of Lao Tze developed most rapidly in my soul, ever forcing their way outwards until I felt it imperious, nay inevitable, to express them in terms of conscious thought.

No sooner had this resolve taken possession of me than I realized that the task approximated to impossibility. His very simplest ideas, the primitive elements of his thought, had no true correspondences in any European terminology. The very first word "Tao" presented a completely insoluble problem. It had been translated "Reason", "The Way", "To Ov." None of these convey any true conception of the Tao.

The Tao is reason in this sense, that the substance of things may be in part apprehended as being that necessary relation between the elements of thought which determines the laws of reason. In other words, the only reality is that which compels us to connect the various forms of illusion as we do. It is thus evidently unknowable, and expressible neither by speech nor by silence. All that we can know about it is that there is inherent in it a power (which however is not itself) by virtue whereof all beings appear in forms congruous with the nature of necessity.

The Tao is also "the Way"—in the following sense. Nothing exists except as a relation with other similarly postulated ideas. Nothing can be known in itself, but only as one of the participants in a series of events. Reality is therefore in the motion, not in the thing moved. We cannot apprehend anything except as one postulated element of an observed impression of change.

We may express this in other terms as follows. Our knowledge of anything is in reality the sum of our observations of its successive movements, that is to say, of its path from event to event. In this sense the Tao may be translated as "the Way." It is not a thing in itself in the sense of being an object susceptible of apprehension by sense or mind. It is not the cause of any thing; it is rather the category underlying all existence or event, and therefore true and real as they are

illusory, being merely landmarks invented for convenience in describing our experiences. The Tao possesses no power to cause anything to exist or to take place. Yet our experience when analyzed tells us that the only reality of which we may be sure is this path or Way which resumes the whole of our knowledge.

As for To Oν,[2] which superficially might seem the best translation of Tao as described in the text, it is the most misleading of the three. For *To On* possesses an extensive connotation implying a whole system of Platonic concepts, than which nothing can be more alien to the essential quality of the Tao. Tao is neither "being" nor "not being" in any sense which Europe could understand. It is neither existence, nor a condition or form of existence. Equally, TO MH ON gives no idea of Tao. Tao is altogether alien to all that class of thought. From its connection with "that principle which necessarily underlies the fact that events occur" one might suppose that the "Becoming" of Heraclitus might assist us to describe the Tao. But the Tao is not a principle at all of that kind. To understand it requires an altogether different state of mind to any with which European thinkers in general are familiar. It is necessary to pursue unflinchingly the path of spiritual development on the lines indicated by the Sufis, the Hindus and the Buddhists; and, having reached the trance called Nerodha-Sammapati, in which are destroyed all forms soever of consciousness, there appears in that abyss of annihilation the germ of an entirely new type of idea, whose principal characteristic is this: that the entire concatenation of One's previous experiences and conceptions could not have happened at all, save by virtue of this indescribable necessity.

I am only too painfully aware that the above exposition is faulty in every respect. In particular, it presupposes in the reader considerable familiarity with the subject, thus practically begging the question. It must also prove almost wholly unintelligible to the average reader, him in fact whom I especially aim to interest.

For his sake I will try to elucidate the matter by an analogy. Consider electricity. It would be absurd to say that electricity *is* any of the phenomena by which we know it. We take refuge in the *petitio principii* of saying that electricity is that form of energy which is the principal cause of such and such phenomena. Suppose now that we eliminate this idea as evidently illogical. What remains? We must not hastily answer "Nothing remains." There is some thing inherent in the nature of consciousness, reason, perception, sensation, and of the universe of which they inform us, which is responsible for the fact that we observe these phenomena and not others; that we reflect upon them as we do, and not

otherwise. But, even deeper than this, part of the reality of the inscrutable energy which determines the form of our experience, consists in determining that experience should take place at all. It should be clear that this has nothing to do with any of the Platonic conceptions of the nature of things.

The least abject asset in the intellectual bankruptcy of European thought is the Hebrew Qabalah. Properly understood, it is a system of symbolism indefinitely elastic, assuming no axioms, postulating no principles, asserting no theorems, and therefore adaptable, if managed adroitly, to describe any conceivable doctrine. It has been my continual study since 1898, and I have found it of infinite value in the study of the "*Tao Teh* K*ing*." By its aid I was able to attribute the ideas of Lao Tze to an order with which I was exceedingly familiar, and whose practical worth I had repeatedly proved by using it as the basis of the analysis and classification of all Aryan and Semitic religions and philosophies. Despite the essential difficulty of correlating the ideas of Lao Tze with any others, the persistent application of the Qabalistic keys eventually unlocked his treasure-house. I was able to explain to myself his teachings in terms of familiar systems.

This achievement broke the back of my Sphinx. Having once reduced Lao Tze to Qabalistic form, it was easy to translate the result into the language of philosophy. I had already done much to create a new language based on English with the assistance of a few technical terms borrowed from Asia, and above all by the use of a novel conception of the idea of Number and of algebraic and arithmetical procedure to convey the results of spiritual experience to intelligent students.

It is therefore not altogether without confidence that I present this translation of the *Tao Teh* K*ing* to the public. I hope and believe that careful study of the text, as elucidated by my commentary, will enable serious aspirants to the hidden Wisdom to understand (with fair accuracy) what Lao Tze taught. It must however be laid to heart that the essence of his system will inevitably elude intellectual apprehension, unless it be illuminated from above by actual living experience of the truth. Such experience is only to be attained by unswerving application to the practices which he advocates. Nor must the aspirant content himself with the mere attainment of spiritual enlightenment, however sublime. All such achievements are barren unless they be regarded as the means rather than the end of spiritual progress; allowed to infiltrate every detail of the life, not only of the spirit, but of the senses. The Tao can never be known until it interprets the most trivial actions of

every day routine. It is a fatal mistake to discriminate between the spiritual importance of meditation and playing golf. To do so is to create an internal conflict. "Let there be no difference made among you between any one thing & any other thing; for thereby there cometh hurt." He who knows the Tao knows it to be the source of all things soever; the most exalted spiritual ecstasy and the most trivial internal impression are from our point of view equally illusions, worthless masks, which hide, with grotesque painted pasteboard false and lifeless, the living face of truth. Yet, from another point of view, they are equally expressions of the ecstatic genius of truth—natural images of the reaction between the essence of one's self and one's particular environment at the moment of their occurrence. They are equally tokens of the Tao by whom, in whom, and of whom, they are. To value them for themselves is to deny the Tao and to be lost in delusion. To despise them is to deny the omnipresence of the Tao, and to suffer the illusion of sorrow. To discriminate between them is to set up the accursed dyad, to surrender to the insanity of intellect, to overwhelm the intuition of truth, and to create civil war in the consciousness.

From 1905 to 1918 the *Tao Teh* K*ing* was my continual study. I constantly recommended it to my friends as the supreme masterpiece of initiated wisdom, and I was as constantly disappointed when they declared that it did not impress them, especially as my preliminary descriptions of the book had aroused their keenest interest. I thus came to see that the fault lay with Legge's translation, and I felt myself impelled to undertake the task of presenting Lao Tze in language informed by the sympathetic understanding which initiation and spiritual experience had conferred on me. During my Great Magical Retirement on Aesopus Island in the Hudson River during the summer of 1918, I set myself to this work, but I discovered immediately that I was totally incompetent. I therefore appealed to an Adept named Amalantrah, which whom I was at that time in almost daily communication. He came readily to my aid, and exhibited to me a codex of the original, which conveyed to me with absolute certitude the exact significance of the text. I was able to divine without hesitation or doubt the precise manner in which Legge had been deceived. He had translated the Chinese with singular fidelity, yet in almost every verse the interpretation was altogether misleading. There was no need to refer to the text from the point of view of scholarship. I had merely to paraphrase his translation in the light of actual knowledge of the true significance of the terms employed. Any one who cares to take the trouble to compare the two versions will be astounded to see how slight a

remodeling of a paragraph is sufficient to disperse the obstinate obscurity of prejudice, and let loose a fountain and a flood of living light; to kindle the gnarled prose of stolid scholarship into the burgeoning blossom of lyrical flame.

I completed my translation within three days, but during the last twenty years I have constantly reconsidered every sentence. The manuscript has been lent to a number of friends, scholars who have commended my work, and aspirants who have appreciated its adequacy to present the spirit of the Master's teaching. Those who had been disappointed with Legge's version were enthusiastic about mine. This circumstance is in itself sufficient to assure me that Love's labour has not been lost, and to fill me with enthusiastic confidence that the present publication will abundantly contribute to the fulfillment of my True Will for which I came to earth. Let us wring from labour and sorrow the utmost of which humanity is capable. Fulfill my Will to open the portals of spiritual attainment to my fellowmen, to bring them to the enjoyment of that realization of Truth, beneath all veils of temporal falsehood, which has enlightened mine eyes and filled my mouth with song.

So there you are.

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

1) The bulk of this letter is Crowley's introduction to his “translation” of the Tao Teh King (now more usually transliterated Dao De Jing) which, as he indicates, was rather a revision and free paraphrase of Legge's translation. It was finally published, along with Crowley's commentary, in two different editions in the mid-1970s. One of these was reprinted in 1995 by Weiser, with Liber XXI, (a verse paraphrase by Crowley of a shorter Taoist writing) as an appendix – T.S.

2) Grk., “Being” or “the Existent.”

Chapter 36

Quo Stet Olympus: Where the Gods, Angels, etc. Live

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

We settled what Gods, angels, demons, elementals *were* some little while ago; we also wrote of *how* they live, so now, insatiable Seeker, you ask *where*.

But surely, even as a child—did you not sing that immemorial Gregorian plain-chant

"There's a Friend for little children
Above the bright blue sky."

Simple enough. A nice flat earth: sun, moon, stars, planets, satellites hung up to dry, with occasional meteorites and comets jazzing about to vary the monotony; above all that, this bright blue floor based upon Reckitts' and advertisements for the Riviera.

Just like that. And above that again, the Jew Jeweller's hashish dream of heaven: see the Apocalypse. A vulgarization of Baudelaire's still, shining, mirror world!

How right Rome was when she put her foot down on great Galileo and his upstart kind! But she did not do the job properly. She should have brewed a bogus bogey-tale to frighten people off astronomy for ever. But perhaps it was already too late! The mischief had struck roots too deep for her.

What had these wizards wrought?

Those lovely mediaeval Charts Celestial that still enchant us by sheer beauty and sublimity had been made mockery by those sinister adepts of sorcery!

No more flat earth on four pillars—on?—

In India the earth was supported by an elephant who stood on a tortoise—who . . . ? No floor above. Nothing but empty space with swarming galaxies; no *room* for "heaven." Simpler to call Olympus or Meru the home of the Gods—believe it or not! don't ask questions!

Yet all the time the difficulty is of our own silly making. The most elementary consideration of the nature of Gods, angels, demons, and the rest, as shown by their peculiar faculties, stamps them all instantly as Beings pertaining to more than three dimensions! Just as no number of lines is enough to produce the smallest plane, as a cube is capable of containing an infinite number of squares, so, far from there being no room for heaven, there is absolutely nothing but room!

Yet of course the nature of that space is for ever incomprehensible, nay inconceivable, by any being of a lower dimension. Only when we have succeeded in uniting our Conscious (three-dimensional) with our Unconscious (four-dimensional) Self can we expect even a symbolic conception of how things go on "in them furrin parts."

Speculation on such points is unpardonably profitless; I have only devoted these few paragraphs to the subject because it is useful to rebut the somewhat soapbox type of critic who thinks to rebut the whole thesis "Sunt Daemones" by the snook-cocking query "Quo Stet Olympus."

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

Chapter 37

Death—Fear—"Magical Memory"

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

You ask me, very naturally, for details of the promise of Nuit (AL I, 58) "…certainty, not faith, while in life, upon death; …"

In the first place, I think that it means what it says. There may be, probably is, some Qabalistic inner meaning: Those four nouns most assuredly look as if there were; but I don't feel at all sure what the Greek (or Hebrew, or Arabic) words would be; in any case, I have not yet made any attempt in this direction.

To the straightforward promise, then! Certainly no word more reassuring could be given. But avoid anxiety, of course; remember "without lust of result," and AL III, 16: "Deem not too eagerly to catch the promises; …" Now, full speed ahead!

Like most promises of this type, it is, one must suppose, conditional.

Such a power is clearly of the Siddhi; and my instinct tells me that it is a result of devotion to Our Lady of the Stars. Somehow I can't think of it as a sort of Birthday Present to a Favourite Nephew. "Why not?" You're right, as usual: *anything* may be a "Play of Nuit." Still, I feel that this would be a rare case.

"But doesn't everything have to happen to everybody?" Yes, of course, in a sense; but don't keep on interrupting! I was coming to something interesting.

I insist of putting forth the immediately useful point of view: "devotion to Nuit" must mean the eager pursuit of the fulfillment of all possibilities, however unpleasant.

Good: now see how logical this is." For how else could one have reasonable "certainty," as contrary with "faith" (=interior conviction), otherwise than by the

acquisition of the "Magical Memory"—the memory of former lives. And this must evidently include that of former deaths. Indeed "Freudian forgetfulness" is very pertinacious on such themes; the shock of death makes it a matter of displaying the most formidable courage to go over in one's mind the incidents of previous deaths. You recall the Buddhist "Ten Impurities;"—The Drowned Corpse, the Gnawed-by-wild-beasts-Corpse, and the rest.

Magick (though I says it as shouldn't) gives a very full and elaborate account of this Memory, and Liber CMXIII (*Thisarb*) a sound Official Instruction on the two main methods of acquiring this faculty. (None of my writings, by the way, deal with the First Method; this is because I could never make any headway with it; none at all. F∴ Iehi Aour, on the other hand, was a wizard at it; he thought that some people could use that way, and others not: born so.

If it should happen that you have that faculty, and no gift at all for the other, it's just too bad; you'd better buzz off, and get another Holy Guru less one-legged.)

There are, however, as I find on reading over what I have written else- where, quite a few lacunae in the exposition; and I may as well now do my best to stop one or two obvious gaps.

The period of my life which was the climax of my work on this subject is those weeks of Thaumaturgy on the Hudson River—I fear the Magical Diary *The Hermit of Aesopus Island* is irretrievably lost—when I was shown the Codex of the *Tao Teh* K*ing* from which my (still unpublished) translation is taken, and when the veil was no more than a shimmering, scintillating gossamer, translucent to the ineffable glory that glows behind it. For in those weeks I was able to remember and record a really considerable number of past lives. (I half believe, and hope, that the relevant passages were copied into one of my Cefalu diaries; but who will struggle through those still extant on the chance?)

"But what about the intervals?" you ask, Shabash! Rem acu tetigisti.**1**

It strikes me with immense and poignant power a right shrewd blow—what of the other side? What of the periods between successive incarnations?

Let us look back for a moment to Little Essays Toward Truth and see what it says about the Fabric of a man. (No, I'm not dodging your query: I'll get there in my own good time. Let a fellow breathe!) Nothing to our purpose, as your smiling shake of the head advises me. And yet—The theory is that the Supernal Triad constitutes (or, rather, is an image of) the "eternal" Essence of a man; that is, it is

the positive expression of that ultimate “Point of View” which is and is not and neither is nor is not etc. Quite indestructible.

Now when a man spends his life (a) building up and developing the six Sephiroth of the Ruach so that they cohere closely in proper balance and relation, (b) in forging, developing and maintaining a link of steel between this solid Ruach and that Triad, Death merely means the dropping off of the Nephesch (Malkuth) so that the man takes over his instrument of Mind (Ruach) with him to his next suitably chosen vehicle. The tendency of the Ruach is of course to disintegrate more or less rapidly under the impact of its new experiences of after-death conditions.

(Hence the supposed Messages from the Mighty Dead, usually Wish-phantasms or outbreaks of the during-life-suppressed Subconscious, often very nasty. The “Medium” gets into communication with the “Shells of the Dead”—Qliphoth, the Qabalah calls them. A month or so, perhaps a year or so in the case of minds very solidly constructed or very passionately attached, and the Shells' “Messages” begin to be less and less coherent, more and more fragmentary, more murderously modified by the experiences it has met in its aimless wanderings. Soon it is altogether broken up, and no more is heard of it.)

It is therefore of the very first importance to train the mind in every possible way, and to bind it to the Higher Principles by steady, by con- stant, by flaming Aspiration, fortified by the sternest discipline, and by continuously reformulated Oaths.

Such a man will be fully occupied after his death with the unremitting search for his new instrument; he will brush aside—as he has made a habit of doing during life—the innumerable lures of “Reward” and the like. (I am not going to ask you to waste any time on the fantastic fairy tales of Devachan, Kama Loka and the rest; this must come up if you want to know about Paccheka-Buddhas, Skooshoks, the Brahma-lokas and so on—but not now, please!)

There is one Oath more important than all the rest put together, from the point of view of the A∴ A∴ You swear to refuse all the “rewards,” to acquire your new vehicle without a moment's delay, so that you may carry on your work of helping Mankind with the minimum of interruption. Like all true Magical Oaths, it is certain of success.

So then we have a man not only very well prepared to reincarnate at once—this means about six months after his death, for his vehicle will be a foetus about three

months old, but to extirpate more deliberately all impressions that may assail its integrity.

Alternatively, there may be something in the nature of such impressions that is unsuitable for carrying over into the *conscious* mind of the new man. Or there may be a rule—e.g. the draught of the waters of the River Lethe—and it might be possible for some Adept (whose initiation is of a higher degree than, or of a different type to, mine) to make his way through that particular barrier.

Enough of may, might, perhaps, and all that harpy brood! The plain fact is that I remember nothing at all of any Post Mortem experiences, and I have never known anyone else who does.

There is one exception. I do remember the *first*, almost momentary, reaction. I am in my Astral Form, in my best Sunday-go-to-meeting Ceremonial Vestments, and with my Wand I seem to hold this raised, attaching great importance to the act—looking down upon the corpse, *exactly* as one does at the outset of an "Astral Journey" in one's days of learning how to do it.

I recall no impression at all made by this sight; neither regret nor relief nor even surprise.

But there is one intensely strong reaction—I fancy I have mentioned this already—when one first remembers one of one's deaths: "By Jove! that *was* a narrow squeak!"

What was it that one feared? I haven't the foggiest.

And that is what I had to tell you about the Magical Memory.

. . . .

No: just one point to go to sleep on: suppose two or more people claim simultaneously to have been Julius Caesar, or Shakespeare, or—oh! always one very great gun! Well, fifty or sixty years ago or more there was a regular vogue for this sort of thing, especially among women. It was usually Cleopatra or Mary Queen of Scots or Marie Antoinette: something regal and tragic preferred, but unsurpassable beauty the prime essential as one would expect.

Of the Mary Queen of Scots persuasion was old Lady Caithness, who seems moreover to have had a sense of humour into the bargain, for she gave a dinner-party in Paris to twelve other ladies, each of whom had also been the luckless

victim of Henry VIII's failure to produce of his own loins a durable male succession. (His marriages were so many desperate efforts to save England from a second innings of the devastation of the Wars of the Roses, from which his father, who was *not* a miser, but a sound financier and economist, had rescued the country. You must understand this if English History is to be at all intelligible to you. The tragedy began with the early death of the Black Prince; the second blow, that of Henry V coupled with the futility of his son and the murder of Prince Edward at Tewkesbury.)

Well, that was a big laugh, of course; it tended to discredit the whole theory of Reincarnation.

Quite unnecessarily, if one looks a little deeper.

What do I mean when I say that I think I was Eliphaz Lévi? No more than that I possess some of his most essential characteristics, and that some of the incidents in his life are remembered by me as my own. There doesn't seem any impossibility about these bundles of Sankhara being shared by two or more persons. We certainly do not know enough of what actually takes place to speak positively on any such point. Don't lose any sleep over it.

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

1: Lat., “You've hit the nail on the head” (lit. “touched the matter with a pin.”)

Chapter 38

Woman—Her Magical Formula

Issa.

Wine rots the liver; fever swells the spleen;
Meat clogs the belly; dust inflames the eye;
Stone irks the bladder: gout—plague—leprosy!
Man born of woman is most full of trouble;
God, a gorged fool that belches him, a bubble!
But of all plagues wherewith a man is cursed,
Take my word for it, woman is the worst!

The World's Tragedy

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

"Pibrock of Dhonuil Dhu,
Kneel for the onset!"

for this letter is to put Woman once and for ever in her place.**1**

But (as usual!) let us first of all make clear what we are to mean by Woman.

Not that amorphous (or rather, as the poet says, "oniscoid with udders") dull and clamorous lump, bovine, imbecile, giggling, truthless, nymphomaniac yet sexless, malignant, interminable, of whom Schopenhauer rhapsodized in his most famous panegyric: apparently his sentimental softness understood only the best side of her.2 No! let us observe, shudder, and lay down the pen.

That makes me feel better; my duty to conscience is done.

. . . .

The eternal antagonism between the sexes is mere illusion. As well suppose the male the enemy of the female screw. Understand the spiritual reality of each,

grasp their magical formulae; the sublime necessity of the apparent opposition will be apparent.

The *ultimate* of Woman is Nuit; that of Man, Hadit. The Book of the Law speaks very fully and clearly in both cases. I quote the principal passages.

A. *Nuit*.

Had! The manifestation of Nuit. [1]

Come forth, o children, under the stars, & take your fill of love!
I am above you and in you. My ecstasy is in yours. My joy is to see your joy.
Above, the gemmed azure is
    The naked splendour of Nuit;
She bends in ecstasy to kiss
    The secret ardours of Hadit.
        The winged globe,the starry blue,
        Are mine, O Ankh-af-na-khonsu! [12-14]

…Since I am Infinite Space, and the Infinite Stars thereof, do ye also thus. … [22]

…And the sign shall be my ecstasy, the consciousness of the continuity of existence, the omnipresence of my body.* [26]

…O Nuit, continuous one of Heaven, let it be ever thus; that men speak not of Thee as One but as None; and let them speak not of thee at all, since thou art continuous!
None, breathed the light, faint & faery, of the stars, and two.
For I am divided for love's sake, for the chance of union. This is the creation of the world, that the pain of division3 is as nothing, and the joy of dissolution all. [27-30]

Obey my prophet! follow out the ordeals of my knowledge! seek me only! Then the joys of my love will redeem ye from all pain. This is so: I swear it by the vault of my body; by my sacred heart and tongue; by all I can give, by all I desire of ye all. [32]

…the Law is for all. [34]

I give unimaginable joys on earth: certainty, not faith, while in life, upon death; peace unutterable, rest, ecstasy: nor do I demand aught in sacrifice.
My incense is of resinous woods & gums; and there is no blood therein: because of

my hair the trees of Eternity.
My number is 11, as all their numbers who are of us. The Five Pointed Star, with a Circle in the Middle, & the circle is Red. My colour is black to the blind, but the blue & gold are seen of the seeing. Also I have a secret glory for them that love me.
But to love me is better than all things: if under the night-stars in the desert thou presently burnest mine incense before me, invoking me with a pure heart, and the Serpent flame therein, thou shalt come a little to lie in my bosom. …
…I love you! I yearn to you! Pale or purple, veiled or voluptuous, I who am all pleasure and purple, and drunkenness of the innermost sense, desire you. Put on the wings, and arouse the coiled splendour within you: come unto me! [58-61]

* Dictated: "the unfragmentary non-atomic fact of my universality . . . (Write this in whiter words, But go forth on)." Ouarda**4** wrote into the MS, later, the five words as in text.

B. *Hadit*.

Nu! the hiding of Hadit.
Come! all ye, and learn the secret that hath not yet been revealed. I, Hadit, am the complement of Nu, my bride. I am not extended, and Khabs is the name of my House.
In the sphere I am everywhere the centre, as she, the circumference, is nowhere found.
Yet she shall be known & I never. [1-4]

I am the flame that burns in every heart of man, and in the core of every star. I am Life, and the giver of Life, yet therefore is the knowledge of me the knowledge of death.
I am the Magician and the Exorcist. I am the axle of the wheel, and the cube in the circle. 'Come unto me' is a foolish word: for it is I that go.
Who worshipped Heru-pa-kraath have worshipped me; ill, for I am the worshipper. [6-8]

For I am perfect, being Not; and my number is nine by the fools; but with the just I am eight, and one in eight: Which is vital, for I am none indeed. The Empress and

the King are not of me; for there is a further secret.
I am the Empress & the Hierophant. Thus eleven, as my bride is eleven. [15-16]

I am the Snake that giveth Knowledge & Delight and bright glory, and stir the hearts of men with drunkenness. … [22]

I am alone: there is no God where I am. [23]

I am the secret Serpent coiled about to spring: in my coiling there is joy. If I lift up my head, I and my Nuit are one. If I droop down mine head, and shoot forth venom, then is rapture of the earth, and I and the earth are one.
There is great danger in me; for who doth not understand these runes shall make a great miss. He shall fall down into the pit called Because, and there he shall perish with the dogs of Reason. [26-27]

Dost thou fail? Art thou sorry? Is fear in thine heart?
Where I am these are not.
Pity not the fallen! I never knew them. I am not for them. I console not: I hate the consoled & the consoler.
I am unique & conqueror. I am not of the slaves that perish. … [46-49]

Blue am I and gold in the light of my bride: but the red gleam is in my eyes; & my spangles are purple & green.
Purple beyond purple: it is the light higher than eyesight. [50-51]

Lest it should all prove too difficult, I have not quoted several passages which are completely beyond my comprehension; even in those here set down, there is quite a little that I should not care to boast that I had altogether clear in my own mind.

Leaving out nearly everything, the only way to simplify it is to call Hadit the "Point-of-view," and "Anywhere" to be the radix of all possible "Point-Events," or "experiences," or "phenomena;" Nuit is the complement, the total possibilities of any such radix. You can only get this properly into that part of your mind which is "above the Abyss," *i.e.* Neschamah: even so, Neschamah must be very thoroughly fertilized by Chiah, and illuminated by Jechidah, to make any sort of a job of it.

But to come down from the contemplation of Abstract Reality (which, being static and "infinite," is ultimately immeasurable) to these Ideas in their interaction (and thus directly observable), it is easy enough to understand the Magical Formula of their interaction. Of course, whatever I say can be no more than a rough approximation, even a suggestion rather than a statement; but I cannot help the

nature of the case. Nuit is the centripetal energy, infinitely elastic because it must fit over the hard thrust directed against it; Hadit, the centrifugal, ever seeking to penetrate the unknown. Nuit is not to dissimilar from the Teh described in *Lao-Tze*.

Nor would it be proper to ignore the *Book of Lies*:

PEACHES

Soft and hollow, how thou dost overcome the hard and full!

It dies, it gives itself; to Thee is the fruit!

Be thou the Bride; thou shalt be the Mother hereafter.

To all impressions thus. Let them not overcome thee; yet let them breed within thee. The least of the impressions, come to its perfection, is Pan.

Receive a thousand lovers; thou shalt bear but One Child.

This child shall be the heir of Fate the Father.

(p. 12)**5**

I want you to realize that this collaboration of the equal opposites is the first condition of existence in any form. The trouble (I think) has always been that nobody ever looked at things from outside; they were always at one end or the other. This is because one haphazard collection of Point-Events chooses to think of itself as a Male; another, as a Female. It is totally absurd to think of Winnie as a woman, and Martin as a man. The quintessence of each is identical: "Every man and every woman is a star." It is only a superficial accident that has made one set determine to function in one particular incarnation as the one or the other. I say function; for there is no difference in the Quintessence.

Yet, since it is with a Being *in its present function* that one has to deal, it needs must that one acts in practice as if "does" were the same as "was." You might be described as one instance of the 0 = 2 equation, and I as another; and any 0 = 2 is indistinguishable from any other. Yet you and I are not identical, because all that I can know of you, or you of me, is a presentation of a part of that 0 = 2 "Universe;" if we were both equally conscious of that Whole, there would be no means of becoming aware, as we are in fact aware, of that distinction.

Somewhat of this is perhaps intended in *The Book of the Law*:

… Bind nothing! Let there be no difference made among you between any one thing & any other thing; for thereby there cometh hurt.
But whoso availeth in this, let him be the chief of all!

(AL I, 22-23)

Whoso availeth (i.e. can put to practical service) is of "presidential timber," so to speak, because he is able to understand the Being behind the Function, and is accordingly not liable to be deceived by the facet that happens to be presented to him in his Function corresponding.

The case is not wholly unlike that of a man on a mountain who should see two other peaks jutting up from a paten of cloud. Those tips give little indication of the great mass that supports each; both are equally of the one same planet; they are in fact identical save for the minute spire visible. Yet he, reconnoitering with intent to climb them observes closely only that function of each crag and icefall which is relevant to his plan to reach their summits. He also is of that One Quintessence; but he must fit himself adroitly to each successive incident of the respective Functions of these mountains if he is to make the contacts which will finally enable him to realize the Point-Events which he will summarize as "I climbed Mount Collon and the Aiguille de la Za."

I don't believe I can put it much better than that, and I'm too lazy to try; but I do want to emphasize that Weininger (in *Sex and Character*) merely scratched the surface. All of us, whether we are "full of strange oaths and bearded like the pard" or "in our hours of ease Uncertain, coy, and hard to please" do in every most minuscule sort of act exercise both the male and female functions almost equally; the determination is rarely more than a matter of a casting vote.

It is so even in the embryo. It is much less than 1/10 of 1% that decides whether the foetus will turn out an Alexander or an Alice. Nature delights in delicate touches of this sort; it is one part of Sulphuric Acid in I don't remember how many million parts of water that is enough to turn blue litmus red; and even with our own gross apparatus we can arrange for a ten-thousandth part of a grain to send a scale down with a bang. Think of a roulette ball hovering on the edge at the end of a long spin! Think of Buridan's ass!

So, once for all, shut up, you screaming parrot! Gabble, gabble, gabble, it's enough to break one's tympana, and drive a man stark staring mad.

Shut up!
Shut up!!
Shut UP!!!

These women!

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

P.S. One ought, perhaps, to give an outline of how these facts work out in the social system of Thelema.

It may be useful to classify women in three groups, (I exclude the fourth, which while anatomically woman, does not function in that capacity: the "spinster.") corresponding to Isis, Osiris and Horus.

The Isis-Class consists of the mother-type. To them the man is no more than the necessary creator and sustainer of her children.

The Osiris-Class comprises those women who are devoted to their man *qua* man, and to his career. Her children, if any, she values as reproductions of the Beloved; they carry him on into futurity by virtue of her deathless love.

The Horus-Class is composed of those women who remain children, the playgirls, who love only for pleasure. To them a child is dull at the best, at the worst a nuisance.

Each of these classes has its qualities and its defects; each should be held in equal, although dissimilar, honour.

And what, you ask, has the man got to say about all this? Nothing simpler; all women are subordinate to his True Will. Only the Osiris-Class, provided he can find one of them, are of more than transient use to him; and even in this case, he must be careful to avoid being ensnared.

But the really important issue is the recognition of each type of True Will in woman.

1: Develop something here about Benny Hill to orient people toward Crowley's sense of humor, et al. – WEH. I have left this note as I found it in the plaintext. I am not familiar with the works of Benny Hill (British comedian, fl. 1970s I believe) – T.S.

2: Arthur Schopenahauer (1788-1860), German philosopher. One of the first Western philosophers to emphasise the notion of the Will, he may have been an influence on Crowley's development of the concept of Thelema, although *contra* Crowley, Schopenhauer believed that the Will was evil and should be denied. The reference in this instance is probably to the essay "On Women" (in Schopenhauer's *Parerga und Paralipomena*) one of the most notoriously misogynistic rants in the history of Western philosophy. Crowley is presumably being ironic here – T.S.

3: In the MS the word "disunion" appears at this point but it has been crossed out and "division" written in above – T.S.

4: Actually the amended reading is in the same hand as the original. There are two points in the MS where Ourada (Crowley's wife Rose) has supplied a missing or indistinctly heard phrase, and the first is in one of the lines here quoted, to wit I.60 where before "My colour is black &c." is an insertion mark, with "(Lost 1 phrase)" in Crowley's hand above, and below, "The shape of my star is —" also in Crowley's hand, then in another hand "The Five Pointed Star, with a Circle in the Middle, and the circle is Red." (I am not convinced that the initial 'f' of 'five' is actually a capital, but it is impossible to be certain given the small sample of Rose's handwriting on the MS of *AL*, and it is the same shape as the initial 'f' in 'force' (III, 72) which is also transcribed as a capital) – T.S.

5: Cap. Δ (4); p. 18 of the second edition.

Chapter 39

Prophecy

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Now, now, now! I really had hoped that this at least you might have spared me. Still, I have to admit that your reason for asking me to go all pontifical about Prophecy is a good one; you want a chucker-out for the loafers that come cadging into your Taverne de la Belle Sibylle, and waste your time with piffle about Pyramids.

What a game!

So naturally you need a Book of the Rules, and a list of the classes of offensive people, whether prostitutes, policemen, or verminous persons. (I quote from the Regulations for secular Pubs!) who think the easiest of all possible refuges from their Fear (see other letters!) is reliance upon the mouldy mumblings of moth-eater mountebanks.

Perhaps it will be best to begin by setting down the necessary conditions for a genuine prophecy. We shall find that most of the famous predictions are excluded without need of more specific examination.

But—priority, please, as usual, for the etymology. Prophesy means "forth-speaking," more or less equal to "inspired." It has nothing to do with foretelling the future, though it may do so, as it may do anything, being only the ravings of a poet, drunkard, or madman. (You remember how Saul came upon a company of youths all prophesying away together to beat the hand, and joined the merry throng. So people said, "Is Saul also among the Prophets?" meaning a man capable of the "divine" intoxication of love, song, eloquence, or whatever else enthusiastic might possess him. Men seized by the afflatus were found to be capable of extraordinary exploits; hence the condition was admired and envied by the average clod. Also, imitated by the average crook!)

For all that, I am going for once to yield to popular clamour, and use words in their popular sense. That seems to me, roughly this: Prediction is a forecast based on reason, prophecy one which claims the warrant of "magical" powers. You agree? Then we can get on.

1. *The prophecy must announce itself as such*. We cannot have people picking up odds and ends which may be perfectly irrelevant, and insisting that they conceal forecasts. This excludes Great Pyramid lunatics; it would be quite simple to do the same sham calculations with the Empire State Building; when the architects protested, it is simple to reply: why, but of course! God was most careful not to let them know what they were really doing, or they would have died of fright!

This argument was actually put forward by the Spiritists when Zancig confessed that his music-hall exploits***** were accomplished by means of a code. It is quite useless to get any sense whatever into the heads of these bigoted imbeciles. Here, A.C! don't forget your best-beloved Browning! In *Mr. Sludge the Medium*, the detected cheat—it was D.D. Home in real life—offers this silly subterfuge:

Why, when I cheat
Mean to cheat, do cheat, and am caught in the act,
Are you, or rather, am I sure o' the fact?
(There's verse again, but I'm inspired somehow)
Well then I'm not sure! I may be perhaps,
Free as a babe from cheating; how it began,
My gift,—no matter; what 'tis got to be
In the end now, that's the question; answer that!
Had I seen, perhaps, what hand was holding mine,
Leading me whither, I had died of fright
So, I was made believe I led myself.

2. *The date of the prophecy must antecede that of its fulfilment*. The very greatest care must be taken to insure this. When both dates are remote, as in the case of "fulfilled" Biblical prophecies, this is often impossible.

3. *The prophecy must be precise*. This rules out cases where alternative verifications are possible.

4. *The prophecy must be more than a reasonable calculation of probability*. This rules out stuff like "The Burden of Nineveh"**1** and the like. Incidentally, "The

Burden of Damascus" does not seem to have had much luck so far! By latest accounts, the old burg wasn't feeling too badly.

We may also refer to the Second Advent: "Behold! I come quickly."**2**

There have been quite a few false alarms to date. (It began with Jesus himself, snapping off the disciple's head: "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" Well, *somebody* was disappointed.)

* Mrs. Zancig sat on the stage, blindfolded. Her husband wandered about the audience, taking one object or another from one or another of them, and asking her "Ready?" "What is this?" "And this?" "This now?" "Right, what's this?" and so on. They had worked out a list of some hundreds of questions to cover any probable article, or to spell its name, or give a number, as when asked the number of a watch or 'bus ticket—and so on. One evening at Cambridge, I was explaining this to a group of undergraduates; being doubted, I offered to do the same trick with the help of one of them—a complete stranger. I only stipulated to ten minutes alone with him "to hypnotize him."

Of course I won easily. They cut out one possible way of communication after another; but I always managed to exchange a few words with my "medium" or slip him a note, so as to have a new code not excluded by the latest precaution.

5. *The verification must be simple, natural, unique and unmistakable*. Forced and far-fetched explanations, distortions of Qabalistic or other mathematical reasoning, are barred.

6. *The prophecy itself must possess the complement of this precision*.
It must be so perfectly unintelligible at the time that the elucidation of the answer makes it certain that the prophet knew precisely the whole riddle.

I feel that this condition is itself expressed in a somewhat oracular form; I will try to clarify by citing what I consider a perfect example. Perfect, I say, because the "must" is a little too strong; there are degrees of excellence.

"That stele they shall call the Abomination of Desolation; count well its name, & it shall be to you as 718." (AL III, 19)

(The Stélé is that whose discovery culminated in the writing of The Book of the Law.)

Here the first part is still quite unintelligible to me: I have tried analysis of the original phrase in "Scripture,"**3** and nearly everything else: entirely in vain: One can see dimly how people, recognizing that Stélé as the Talisman responsible for reducing half the cities of Europe to rubble, might very well make reference to those original prophecies. But, at the best, that's nothing to cable to Otaheite about!

Now the second part. This was even more baffling than the other. "Count well its name"? how can I? it never had a name! So I tried all sorts of experiments with 718. Shin, 300, the letter of Spirit, with our key-number 418, looks promising. Only one more pie-crust! I kept attacking, off and on, for many a long year, got out all sorts of fantastic solutions, complex and confused; they simply shouted their derision at me.

It was one glorious night in Cefalù, too utterly superb to waste in sleep; I got up; I adored the Stars and the Moon; I revelled in the Universe. Yet there was something pulling at me. It pulled eftsoons my body into my chair, and I found myself at this old riddle of 718. Half-a dozen comic failures. But I felt that there was something on the way. Idly, I put down Stélé in the Greek, 52,**4** and said, "Perhaps we can make a 'name' out of the difference between that and 718."

I jumped.

718 - 52 = 666

My own name!

Why, of course, quoth he, in glee; it is in fact the Stélé of 666; for it is the Stélé of Ankh-f-n-khonsu, my name in those past days.

Oh, no! said Something, that's not good enough! "Count well its *name*"—the Stélé of Ankh-f-n-khonsu: a *name* is something to which it answers, quite different from a title. That solution is clever, but it just won't do, because that Stélé never had a name!

You lie! I shouted, as the full light broke through the mists of my mind: In these three Thousand years it has once, if only once, had a *name*, by invoking which you could bring it up before you; its *name* is "Stélé 666" in the Catalogue of the Museum at Boulak!

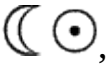
A single simple hammerstroke, and the nail is driven home to the head!

Compare this with the chaotic devices of the "bilateral-cipher" maniacs, by the application of which it is easy to prove that Bernard Shaw wrote Rudyard Kipling. Or anything else! you pay your money, and you take your choice.

7. Another strong point is that the prophecy should on the surface mean something vague and plausible, and, interpreted, possess this same quality of unique accuracy.

For instance (although it is not prediction) consider "Love is the law, love under will." Yes, that sounds very well; I dare say that is an excellent point of philosophy.—But! well, anyone might say that. Oh, no! For when we use the Greek of the technical terms, we find ΑΓΑΠΗ, Love, and ΘΕΛΗΜΑ, Will, both of the value of 93—and these only two blossoms of the Tree whose root is 31, and the entire numerical-verbal system based thereupon organized with incredibly simple intricacy; well, that is an Eohippus of an entirely different tint! It is no more the chance (if happy) statement of any smooth-tongued philosopher, but the evidence of, and the key to, an incalculably vast design. As well attribute the Riemann-Christoffel Tensor to the "happy thought" of some post-prandial mathematician.

Here is another case.

Now then this two-in-One letter  , is the third Key to this Law; and on the discovery of that fact, after years of constant seeking, what sudden splendours of Truth, sacred as secret, blazed in the midnight of my mind! Observe now; "…this circle squared in its failure is a key also."**5** Now I knew that in the value of the letters ALHIM,**6** 'the Gods', the Jews had concealed a not quite correct value of π, the ratio of a circle's circumference to its diameter, to 4 places of decimals: 3.1415; nearer would be 3.1416. If I prefix our Key, 31 putting  , Set or Satan, before the old Gods, I get 3.141593, π correct to six places, Six being my own number and that of Horus the Sun.**7**

And one more, this time an actual prediction.

Here again is what might at first seem almost an evasion! "…one commeth after him,…" indeed! I suppose so. It fits anybody who discovers it or claims to have done so.

Not one little bit!

For when the time came, and the Key was found, the finder's name in the Order was—and had been from the moment of his admission as a probationer—Achad, the Hebrew word for "One." And he came "after him" in the precise technical sense, that he was in fact the next person to undertake the Adventure of the Abyss.

I hope you are not getting the idea that my Prophetic ambit is limited to these high-falutin' metaphysical masterpieces of Runic Lore. In case you do, I now propose to break your "seven green withes that were never dried" altogether, Delilah; for I shall keep my hair on. I shall go forth to war! From 1920 to 1923 my abode for a season was the house called the Horsel of the Abbey of Thelema that lieth upon Santa Barbara, overlooking the town of Telepylus—see Homer and Samuel Butler II, but called later by the Romans Cephaloedium, and now Cefalù. There did I toil to expand my little Part III of *Book 4* to the portentous volume now more generally known as *Magick in Theory and Practice*. After numerous misadventures, it was published in 1928.**8**

I refer you to that book, page 96.

One last word on this subject. There is a Magical Operation of maximum importance: the Initiation of a New Aeon. When it becomes necessary to utter a Word, the whole Planet must be bathed in blood. Before man is ready to accept the Law of Thelema, the Great War must be fought. This Bloody Sacrifice is the critical point of the World-Ceremony of the Proclamation of Horus, the Crowned and Conquering Child, as Lord of the Aeon.*****

The whole matter is prophesied in *The Book of the Law* itself; let the student take note, and enter the ranks of the Host of the Sun.

* Note: This paragraph was written in the summer 1911, e.v., just three years before its fulfilment. Second innings '38 e.v., sqq.**9**

(It is a pity that I cannot prove my footnote, but this Chapter XII was part of the original MS, advertised as to be published in 1912. You may take my word for it, for once. And in any case we have the prophecy of Bartzabel, the Spirit of Mars, in the early summer of 1910 that wars involving the disaster of (a) Turkey and (b) Germany would be fought within 5 years. **10** See the *New York World*, December, 1914.)

We now proceed to *Magick*, page 112.

But now observe how the question of the Magical Link arises! No matter how mighty the truth of Thelema, it cannot prevail unless it is applied to and by mankind. As long as *The Book of the Law* was in Manuscript, it could only affect the small group amongst whom it was circulated. It had to be put into action by the Magical Operation of publishing it. When this was done, it was done without proper perfection. Its commands as to how the work ought to be done were not wholly obeyed. There were doubt and repugnance in FRATER PERDURABO's mind, and they hampered His work. He was half-hearted. Yet, even so, the intrinsic power of the truth of the Law and the impact of the publication were sufficient to shake the world so that a critical war broke out, and the minds of men were moved in a mysterious manner. The second blow was struck by the re-publication of the Book in September 1913, and this time the might of this Magick burst out and caused a catastrophe to civilization. At this hour, the MASTER THERION is concealed, collecting his forces for a final blow. When *The Book of the Law* and its Comment is published with the forces of His whole Will in perfect obedience to the instructions which have up to now been misunderstood or neglected, the result will be incalculably effective. The event will establish the kingdom of the Crowned and Conquering Child over the whole earth, and all men shall bow to the Law, which is "love under will."

This should be plain enough, and satisfactory. However, I thought it was time to draw public attention to these matters more emphatically.

In fulfillment of my pledge given above, and of the instructions originally given to me by the Masters, I got out *The Equinox of the Gods* at 6:22 a.m., Dec. 22. 1937, e.v.; and, to fulfill my condition No. 1 (above) of a Prophecy, as well as to establish the date, I got a reporter on the spot, with the result following:

These Names Make News.

Mixed Bag of Early Birds.

An Englishman, a Jew, an Indian, a Negro, a Malayan—no, it's not one of those saloon-bar jokes—assembled on the Embankment, by Cleopatra's Needle, soon after 6 a.m. yesterday.

They were there to assist at the publication of a book by 62 year- old magician, ALEISTER CROWLEY.

Publication occurred at 6:22 sharp, when the Sun entered Capricornus.

Crowley make a short speech; as “the Priest of the Princes” proclaimed the Law of Thelema; handed copies of book to white, red, brown, black, yellow representatives.

Representative of the “black” race was a dancing-girl. Indian was a non-English speaking Bengali Muslim, who seemed rather puzzled by the whole business.

Book contains message dictated to Crowley at Cairo in 1904 “by Aiwass, a Being whose nature he does not fully understand but who described Himself as 'The Minister of Hoor-Paar-Kraat' (the Lord of Silence).”

Prospectus of book says it's been published three times before; adds, sinisterly, that first publication was nine months before outbreak of Balkan war, second, nine months before outbreak of world war, third, nine months before outbreak of Sino-Japanese war.

No coincidence, it says: “the might of this Magick burst out and caused a catastrophe to civilisation.”

Well, we'll see next September . . . .

“It's a bit hard of you to wish another war on us,” I said to Crowley.

“Oh, but if everyone will only do as I tell them to,” he replied, “the catastrophe can be averted.”

“Somehow I fear they won't.”

. . . .

“Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.”

Then I issued a prospectus for the book, giving the facts as to previous publications and their results, and leaving blank a space after “The Fourth Publication” to wait the event.

THE FIRST PUBLICATION

nine months before the outbreak of the Balkan War, which broke up the Near East.

When this was done it was done without proper perfection. Its commands as to how the work ought to be done were not wholly obeyed . . . Yet, even so, the intrinsic power of the truth of the Law and the impact of publication were

sufficient to shake the world, so that a critical war broke out, and the minds of men were moved in a mysterious manner.“

THE SECOND PUBLICATION

nine months before the outbreak of the World War, which broke up the West.

“The second blow was struck by the re-publication of the Book in September, 1913, and this time . . . caused a catastrophe to civilisation. At this hour, the Master Therion is concealed, collecting his forces for a final blow. When *The Book of the Law* and its Comment is published . . . in perfect obedience to the instruction . . . the result will be incalculably effective. The event will establish the Kingdom of the Crowned and Conquering Child over the whole earth, and all men shall bow to the Law, which is love under will.”

THE THIRD PUBLICATION

nine months before the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war, which is breaking up the Far East.

THE FOURTH PUBLICATION

6:22 a.m., December 22, 1937, e.v.

This series of actions complies perfectly with the condition of Prophecy.

Nine months elapsed, and I was able to overprint, also to reprint, enlarged to four pages my remaining prospectuses in red ink. As follows:

nine months before the Betrayal, which stripped Britain of the last rags of honour, prestige and security, and will break up civilisation.

I have always maintained that Munich marked the true outbreak of the war, because Hitler's rape of Czecho-Slovakia, however justifiable, was irreconcilably incompatible with our Foreign Policy; and Munich is Nine Months to a day after my Gesture.

This then I consider a completely documented case of Prophecy.

And I shall be a completely documented case of Brain-Fag unless I shut up NOW.

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

1: Nahum I.1

2: Apocalypse, XXII, 20.

3: See First Maccabees, I. 54, and the back-dated "prophecies" of pseudo-Daniel (XI. 31, XII. 11); the reference was to the erection of a statue to Zeus-Serapis in the Temple of Jerusalem by Antiochus Epiphanes following his conquest of Judea – T.S.

4: This enumeration depents on reading ST as the obsolete letter *Stau* or *Stigma* which has the value 6 – T.S.

5: AL III. 47.

6: Spelt in Hebrew letters in the original.

7: This Sun & Moon symbolism flows from Crowley's work with Greek, Tarot and Hebrew. "Set" as Sigma-Theta or as Shin-Teth. Taking the numbers for the corresponding Tarot Trumps from the Thoth Deck, we get XX + XI = 31. See *O.T.O. Newsletter*, No. 7-8, p. 9 ff, "Liber MCCLXIV The Greek Qabalah" and No. 9, p. 31 – WEH. See also Liber V vel Reguli. To clarify: the Greek letter Sigma Σ can also be written as C, which approximates the symbol for the moon; a capital Theta, Θ, approximates the symbol for the Sun. Shin-Teth are the Hebrew equivalents. I am not quite clear on how Crowley reads 3.141593 from ShT + ALHIM: reducing each letter to units gives the sequence 3, 9, 1, 3, 5, 1, 4 and there is no way one can get the required order from that with a constant step. To get 3.1415 from ALHIM is not a simple reversal of the order but requires writing the numbers around an Invoking Pentagram and reading them in the order of the corresponding Banishing Pentagram. See *A Note on Genesis* – T.S.

8: *sic.*, should be 1930 – T.S.

9: The postscript was apparently hand-written by Crowley into one of his copies of *Magick in Theory and Practice.*

10: See "An Evocation of Bartzabel the Spirit of Mars" in *Equinox* I (9), and "The Bartzabel Working" (Equinox IV (2) – T.S.

Chapter 40

Coincidence

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

When I was writing that letter about prophecy, I was hot and bothered all the time by my faithful sentinel, the well-greaved Hoplite that stands at the postern of my consciousness, ready to challenge every thought—and woe to the intruder who cannot give the countersign! This time the dear old ruffian thought the matter serious enough to report Higher Up. "It is put plainly enough, emphatically enough, incontrovertibly enough" was the gist of his communication "that the first and most irretrievable trick of the enemy is to dupe you into passing Captain Coincidence as 'Friend,' whereas he is naturally the most formidable of all your foes when it comes to a question of proof."

Quite right, Sergeant-Major! But it is not only about prophecy, but about all sorts of things, in particular, of course, the identification of angels and similar problems.

Well, we have captured quite a few lads of the company of Captain Coincidence; let us have them up for examination and learn what we can about their weapons and other warlike matters!

I take our first prisoner from *Magick*.

The most famous novel of Fielding is called *Tom Jones*. It happened that FRATER PERDURABO was staying in a hotel in London. He telephoned a friend named Fielding at the latter's house, and was answered by Mr. Fielding's secretary, who said that his employer had left the house a few minutes previously, and could only be reached by telephoning a certain office in the City at between 11 o'clock and a quarter past. FRATER PERDURABO had an appointment at 11 o'clock with a music-hall star, the place being the entrance to a theatre. In order to remind himself, he made a mental note that, as soon as he saw the lady, he would raise his hand and say, before greeting her: 'Remind me that I must telephone at once to Fielding,' when he met her. He did this, and she advance toward Him with the

same gesture, and said in the same breath, 'Remind me that I have to telephone to Tom Jones'— the name of a music-hall agent employed by her.

Here comes another, this time completely crazy! Nothing "Literary" about it; no sense anywhere; a pure freak.

A friend of mine, A, rang up a friend of hers, B, at her flat in Holland Park, some 3 or 4 miles west, and a p'int to the Nor'rard, of Piccadilly Circus. After the usual series of "they don't answer", "line's engaged", "unobtainable", "line's out of order", "line's temporarily disconnected at the subscriber's request", an appeal to "Supervisor" got her connected instantly. Yet another girl friend, C, appears in, and vanishes from, the story; she said "Oh, what a pity, you've just missed her; she went out five minutes ago. I think she'll be back in an hour's time, try then."

A waited impatiently, and rang up once more. Again the series of nonsense-difficulties about getting the connection. At last the answer came. This time yet one more girl friend D. "Oh, what a pity! You've just missed her; she left the box not five minutes ago." "Box," screamed A, "what box? Have I got mixed up in a Trunk Murder?" "Why, *this* box," replied D, calmly. "What — — box?" shouted A. "Isn't that her flat?" "Her flat! are you crazy? This is a call-box in Shaftesbury Avenue." Collapse of A's confidence in the sanity of Nature.

One may note that there was no similarity in the names of the exchanges, or in the numbers.

It is the most grotesquely impossible case of "wrong number" that ever came my way.

Now for one or two oddities. Recently, needing to relax, I borrowed three "thrillers" from different sources. In every case, the plot turned on two men being so alike that no one could tell them apart. (*Rupert of Hentzau, John Chilcote, M.P., Melander's Millions*.)

I traveled from Louisville to Detroit by a railroad whose nickname was the "Big Four", my object being some business connected with my *Book 4*. The name of my express was the "Big Four"—it left from No. 4 platform at 4 p.m. My sleeping berth was No. 4 in Car No. 4; and my ticket was No. 44,444. I ought to have been April 4, I suppose; but it wasn't.

Last week a letter from me appeared in the Sunday Dispatch with regard to the Everest Mystery of 1921. I expressed my view that the two lost climbers, last seen

on an easy snow-slope near the summit, had simply been blown into the air by one of the sudden gusts of incredible fierce winds which are common at those heights, and dashed to earth perhaps a mile away.

After reading this, I went to a friend's room to borrow a book, picked up her Shakespeare's *Histories*, and, opening it at random, came upon:

They that stand high have many blasts to shake them,
And if they fall, they dash themselves to pieces.

Richard III, Act I, Sc. 3.

Now here's a story that's too good to lose; not the mistiest phantasm of an ideogram how to class it; for one thing, it's chock-a-block with moral lessons and economic theories and political summats; but there's coincidence in it somewhere, and under coincidence down it shall go. Even if only by coincidence.

From 1895 e.v. onwards I dealt with Colin Lunn.

"Of all the tobacconists under the sun,
There is none, there is none, like the great Colin Lunn—"

of Sidney Street, Cambridge. When I started round the world, alas for fidelity! I began to forget him. By 1906 e.v. the operation was practically complete.

In '42 e.v. I spent a few days with friends in Cambridge. Sauntering along K.P. (King's Parade to you, madam!) on my way back to the station with half an hour or so to kill, I thought I would pop in to Lunn's new shop there, and pass the time of day. He might have something to take my fancy. So I did. Needless to say, I didn't know the shopman from Adam, as he did not offer me a view of his identification mark. I asked after old friends; we gossiped of old times and new; presently he observed, putting a hand under the counter: "I think this is yours sir." "How do you know who I am? I've never seen you before." "Oh, yes sir, I was the odd-job boy at the old Sidney Street shop; I remember you quite well." By this time there lay on the counter a strange familiar-unfamiliar object—a pipe that I had left for some minor repair before hurrying off to the East 37 years before! I am smoking it now.

And you can draw your own beastly conclusion!

Here is a last, a passing strange account of a coincidence—or should it come under "Answers to Prayer."

A young enthusiastic "Heaven Born" (=I.C.S.)* parlous pious, was engaged to an exquisite chaste damosel in Lutterworth. Praised and promoted by his appreciative chiefs in Bombay, he felt his future sure enough to go home on leave, marry her, and bring her out to India. At their parting, she had given him a ring; naturally, he set great store by it." But the climate had thinned him; it was loose; playing with it as he talked with a friend on the ship, it slipped from his finger, and fell into the harbour." He suppressed an expression of annoyance. "Well that's past praying for," laughed the friend—unhappily an infidel, not a *true* friend at all. The young man stiffened. "It is?" he answered solemnly and emphatically; "We shall see." And he retired to his cabin to lay his grief before the Lord.

The ship arrived at Aden without incident. While she was coaling, it was the idle habit of some sailors to bait a hook with a large piece of pork, and fish for sharks. An hour later they caught a fine specimen, and hauled it aboard. They cut it open. No ring.

I hope you don't think I'm letting my pen run away with me:

"Pens! Good Lord,
Who knows if you drive them or they drive you?"

* Indian Civil Servant.

No, I have not forgotten that I am here to instruct as well as to amuse: also, to make certain observations which will, I flatter myself, be rather new to you.

I plunge headlong.

Everything that happens, no matter what, is an inconceivably improbable coincidence. You remember how you had to begin when you first came to me for help. I said to you, "Here are you, and no other person, come to see me, and no other person, in this room, and no other room, at this time, and not other time. How did that come about?" The answer to that question is the first entry in your Magical Diary: and, with a slightly different object in view, the first step in the practice of Liber Thisharb and the acquisition of Magical Memory.

Why, hang it all; the events of the last hour, even, might have gone just an infinitesimally little bit different, and the interview would not have taken place as

it did. Consider then, that factors stretching back into Eternity—all the factors there are!—have each one contributed in its degree to bringing this interview about. What a fantastic improbability! Yet here we are.

Chance blindly rules the Universe. But what is Chance? And where does purpose intervene? To what extent?

I shall now conduct you, no less firmly than Mr. E. Phillips Oppenheim, to Monte Carlo.

(Excuse me! I was just called to the telephone. Somebody of whose existence I was not aware has fallen ill in Ireland—and bang went my plans for tomorrow.)

You walk quietly into the Casino; it seems to you that the excitement is even more noticeable than usual. You see a friend at the table "Here in the nick of time!" he gasps. "Black has just turned up for the 24th time running." You press forward to plank the maximum on Red. The wheel spins; Black again! "Forty thousand she-devils in the belfry of St. Nicholas Rocambole-de-Ronchonot!"

"But — but" (you stammer when spirits of hartshorn have revived you) "in the whole history of the tables a colour has *never* turned up more than 24 times running!"

My poor friend, what has that got to do with it? True, *from the start* it is countless millions to 1 that there will not be a run of 24 on the red or the black; but the probability on any single spin (ignoring zero) is always one to one. The black compartments do not contract because the ball has fallen into any one of them.

Anyone who gambles at all is either a dilettante, a crook, or a B.F. If you could get the B.F.'s to understand the very elementary mathematics set forth above, good-night to gambling! And a good riddance, at that! Well, there is one advantage in the system; it does help the intelligent man to steal a march on his neighbours!

In all this the important point for my present purpose is to show you how entirely this question of probability and coincidence is dependent on *your attention*.

The sequence B B B B B B B at roulette is most unlikely to occur; but so, in exactly the same degree, is the sequence B R B R R B R or any other sequence. The one passes unnoticed, the other causes surprise, only because you have in your mind the idea of "a run on black."

Extend this line of thought a little, and link it up with what I was saying about the Magical Diary; you realize that every phenomenon soever is equally improbably, and "infinitely" so. The Universe is therefore *nothing but* Coincidence!

How then can any event be more improbable than any other? Why, very simply. Go back to Monte; proclaim that at Table No. 3 Black will turn up 7 times running, after this next spin. (Or, of course, any other series of 7.) *Now* you see how Coincidence links up with Prophecy!

A fortiori, Coincidence is destroyed by Purpose, if, wishing to enlighten you on the subject, I write this letter and post it to your address, your receipt of it is no longer Coincidence. So then coincidence must be entirely both unforeseen and unintentional; in other words, absolutely senseless. But we have just proved that the Universe is nothing *but* Coincidence; it therefore is senseless.

So, having established the asymptote of our hyperbolic hyperbola, and shewn it to be asynartete, why should we not acquiesce, and say olive oil?

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

Chapter 41

"Are we Reincarnations of the Ancient Egyptians?"

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

That accursed conscience of mine has been pricking me ever since I dashed off that rather curt and off-hand letter card in answer to yours of the 18th. I had intended as a matter of fact to let you have the present coruscation as soon as I could get my secretary in the offing, but I thought I would snap your head off in the strength of your question as salutary chastisement.

I do wish you would understand that all these speculations are not only idle and senseless because you cannot possibly verify their accuracy, but a deadly You ask if we, meaning, I suppose, the English, are now reincarnating the Egyptians. When I was a boy it was the Romans, while the French undertook the same thankless office for the Greeks. I say "deadly poison;" because when you analyse you see at once that this is a device for flattering yourself. You have a great reverence for the people who produced Luxor and the Pyramids; and it makes you feel nice and comfortable inside if you think that you were running around in those days as Rameses II or a high priest in Thebes or something equally congenial.

You may say that I am myself the chief of sinners in this respect because of Ankh-f-n-Khonsu, but this was not my doing. It was imposed upon me by <u>The Book of the Law</u>, and I do not feel particularly flattered or comforted by this identification. The only interest to me is the remarkable manner in which this is interwoven with the existence of the "Cairo working."

Your second and third questions are still worse. I should be ashamed of myself if I were to do so much as to refer to them.

That must serve for that. But your fourth question I did answer after a fashion. It has however struck me that I might have given you a more detailed instruction with advantage.

When I was up the Mindoun Chong in Burma, I started an investigation of my dreams; and the only way to catch them was to write down as much as I could remember on waking, instantly. The result of doing this is rather surprising. To begin with, I discovered, especially as the practice progressed, that I was having many more dreams than I had previously supposed. This might have come about in either of two ways.

(1) The practice might have actually increased my tendency to dream, and (2) the habit of observation may have brought dreams to the surface which would otherwise have gone unremarked. In either case the figures were quite definite.

I found almost at once, that is to say after about a month, that practically every dream that I could remember, could be quite clearly ascribed to one of two causes: (a) the events of the previous day or days, or the subjects which had interested and excited me during that period, and (b) the physical conditions of the moment. For instance, a good deal of the time of the experiment I was sleeping in what might have been euphemistically called a houseboat. It was liable to leak; and on such occasions as I woke to find water trickling down my nose, I found that the dream from which I had wakened was an adventure of some sort in connection with water. (It is quite notorious, I believe, that many asthmatic subjects are pestered by dreams of having been guillotined in a previous incarnation. Alan Bennett, I may mention, was one such.)

As the practice proceeds, you should find not only that your dreams increase in number per night, but also became very much fuller, clearer and more coherent. I assume that the reason is that the fact of your paying attention to them brings them to the surface.

I am not quite sure whether this is a complete and adequate answer to your question 4, “How can I best bring my sleeping memory into my waking hours?”

I have studied, and my secretary has studied, and we can make no head or tail of your remark about brain exercises with sketch.

Well, I must hope for the best, and leave you with my blessing.

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

Chapter 42

This “Self” Introversion

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

“…It is a lie, this folly against self.…” (AL II, 22)

The English is very un-English, and the context hardly helpful. But the meaning is clear enough; the idea is to dismiss, curtly and rudely, the entire body of doctrine which insists on altruism as a condition of spiritual progress.

Why do I jump in with this text without warning. Because at the end of my letter on Sammasati the Dweller of the Threshold popped up, and that brings us to the Black Brothers, and the Left-hand path, all of which subjects are very generally supposed to depend for origin upon “Selfishness.”

This question is one of the most critical in the whole of Magical Theory; for in one sense it is certainly true that every error without exception is due to exacerbation of the Ego.

Yet *The Book of the Law* flings at us disdainfully: “It is a lie, this folly against self.”

How then?

I fear there is nothing for it but to go thoroughly into the whole matter of the “self.” This may involve some recapitulation; but then didn't the Buddha repeat three times every one of those extravagantly verbose paragraphs which give the luckless Bhikku—timens, not tumens, as Catullus says—permission to have (a) walls (b) roof © window (d) door (e) hinge to door (f) fastening to door (g) h, and c.**1**—no, he didn't! anyhow, all those ancient conveniences?

“Self” is one of the trickiest words afloat. Skeat gives merely the equivalents, all practically the same in sound, in various Nordic languages; he doesn't say where it comes from, or what it means. I don't know either, bless your heart!

Latin and Greek don't help us at all; and when we try Eastern languages, it seems, dimly, to give the idea of the Ego, whatever that may be. Or perhaps "that combination which is unified by Ahamkara, the "Ego-making faculty."

Decidedly not illuminating!

One can't use the word as an ordinary noun. Skeat doesn't even label it as such. One can hardly say: Mr. Blenkinsop's self is good, or rheumatic, or gone for a walk. It makes nonsense. Yet Philosophy has picked out this hapless Tetragrammaton, and made endless mud pies with it!

When one says: "I fell and hurt myself", it's only a conventional abbreviation. One means "my nose," or "my elbow," as the case may be! No, I can't conscientiously admit it as a noun. More accurately: "my body fell, and I am suffering from the injury thereby caused to my whatever it was."

And so what?

(Oh dear, I *am* tying ourselves into knots!)

So what? Ah me, nothing for it but to plunge head foremost into the hybrid abyss of Babu-Blavatsky bak-abak!

Brahman—don't confuse with the Brahma of the Trimurti, so so many Nippies and Clippies are but too liable to do—is the macrocosmic Negative Absolute, when cross-examined; its microcosm is Purusha or Atma. Very near our own Qabalistic Zero—Nought in no dimensions—equals Infinity (air connu). Then comes Buddhi, which curates, bookmakers' clerks, miners and Privy Councillors so often mistake for Buddha (Ha! Ha!), the faculty of discrimination. Pretty much like the 0 = 2 equation in our system.

Next, the Higher Manas, which is our Neschamah, as near as a toucher; and the Lower Manas, which, as every Lovely and Cutie well Knows, is our Ruach. The rest of the Hindu system can easily be fitted in.

Note, however, the Ahamkara, usually translated "Ego-making faculty," which collects what it can from this dump, and labels it "I."

There seems not much point in elaborating all this. The Hindu Pandit is a whale for swallowing numberless oceans, all swarming with Jonahs; he duplicates and discriminates and invents at his own sweet will, in order to get a pretty pattern with 84 or 108 crores of asankyas of lakhs of anythings.

We have done enough for honour.

Enough if we see that the system is in its essence identical with our own.

Well, then, what is this "Higher Self" that you roll out upon me?

Actually, we are very far from being out of the wood. This Ut, of Udgitha, who looms so large in the *Upanishads*; the God peculiar to yourself, who appears in one of the *Darshanas*; some Individual constructed from the material listed above; are these all one? If not, is the difference between them more than a quibble?

Really, all these speculations are based on *à priori* considerations; we had better drop the whole argument as little better than a waste of time; nay, as worse, for it encourages one in loose thinking, and especially in clinging to *names* which have no counterpart in *things*.

There is only one point of theory which matters to our practice. We may readily concur that the Augoeides, the "Genius" of Socrates, and the "Holy Guardian Angel" of Abramelin the Mage, are identical. But we cannot include this "Higher Self"; for the Angel is an actual Individual with his own Universe, exactly as man is; or, for the matter of that, a bluebottle. He is not a mere abstraction, a selection from, and exaltation of, one's own favorite qualities, as the "Higher Self" seems to be. The trouble is (I think) that the Hindu passion for analysis makes them philosophize any limited being out of existence.

This matter is of importance, because it influences one's attitude to invocation. I can, for instance, work myself up to a "Divine Consciousness," in which I can understand, and act, as I cannot in my normal state. I become "inspired;" I feel, and I express, ideas of almost illimitable exaltation. But this is *totally* different from the "Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel," which is the special aim of the Adeptus Minor. It is ruin to that Work if one deceives oneself by mistaking one's own "energized enthusiasm" for external communication. The parallel on the physical plane is the difference between Onanism and Sexual Intercourse.

Probably, my reason for insistence on this point is my antipathy to introversion in any form. The "mystic path" itself is packed with dangers. Unless the strongest counter-irritants are exhibited, the process is almost certain to become morbid. It is only one step from the Invocation of Zeus, or Apollo, or Dionysus, which does demand identification of oneself with the object of one's worship, to a form of self-worship which soon develops into a maniacal exacerbation of the Ego; and if one

persists in this involuted curve, one becomes a “Black Brother,” or departs for the local loony-bin.

Invocations of even the most positive Gods are dangerous, unless care can be taken to keep the personality of the god distinct from one's own. Athene is a superb deity; but one does not want to be nothing but Athene, except in that supreme moment of Samadhi with Her which is the climax of the invocation.

Do you remember one of Barbey d'Aurevilly's *Contes Cruels* about a Spanish nobleman who anticipated one of the privileges of marriage instead of waiting for ecclesiastical licence? The Inquisitor simply had him tied to his betrothed for 48 hours.

It is really rather like that! One of my mathematically-minded disciples—J.W.N. Sullivan, I think—told me that his sinister science had one peculiarly devilish pitfall; one is so satisfactorily equipped for work if one had but a bit of paper and a pencil—and a comfortable bed! He had to make a point of severe physical exercise to escape becoming bed-ridden in his early twenties!

So, even in divine invocation, one should insist on definite communication of knowledge (or what not) which is incontestably not one's own. The fact that the self-begotten feelings and ideas are so eminently satisfactory—naturally, since there is nobody to oppose them—is damnably seductive.

Once started on that road, one can easily develop self-deception to a fine art. One can imagine that one has undergone, or achieved, all sorts of experiences “as described in the books,” when all that one has actually done is to work the results of one's reading into a bubble inflated by imagination.

It should be obvious to you that the habit grows on one; every bad quality, from vanity to laziness, lends most willing aid. One replaces reality more and more continuously by these exciting and flattering reveries, which by this time have no longer any shadow of a claim to be called mystic experiences at all.

It is desperately difficult to cure such conditions; the patient resents bitterly every touch of truth, for he feels it, accurately enough, as a thrust to the very core of his being.

Parallel with this, in my psychoanalytic practice I have had excellent success with all forms of sexual aberration, with the one exception of masturbation.

In these cases, even though I have often been successful in "curing" the condition, so that the man has been able to carry on with satisfaction to himself and his family the normal functions of a husband, I have never really got rid of the peculiar mental and moral characteristics which have been, if not implanted, at least encouraged and fostered, by this devastating habit.

Now do remember this; it is the guarantee of wholesomeness in any Invocation that there should be *contact with another*. It is better to conjure up the most obnoxious demons from the most noisome pit of Hell than to take one's own exhilarations for Divine benediction; if only because there was never a demon yet so atrocious as that same old Ego.

You will discover the truth of these remarks when you approach the Frontier of the Abyss. Well, now, if that isn't too funny! The text of this stupendous sermon was AL II, 22. I take this verse in its most obvious and ordinary sense; for instance, the following sentence: "… The exposure of innocence is a lie. …"; for that means clearly enough Hypocrisy. So "… It is a lie, this folly against self. …" only means, "To hell with sentimental altruism, with false modesty, with all those most insidious fiends, the sense of guilt, of shame—in a word, the 'inferiority complex' or something very like it." The whole tenor of *The Book of the Law*, is to this effect. The very test of worth is that one should be aware of it and not afraid to sock the next man on the jaw if he disputes it!

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

P.S. But what do I mean when I say "myself" in normal speech? I mean Tiphareth, the human self as determining the identity of the Supreme Triad plus as much Ruach as I have succeeded in organising as extensions of it.

Though your Supernal Triad is in essence identical with mine, your Tiphareth is quite definitely not mine. It is like mine in its nature and many of its sympathies, but your Ruach is altogether different from mine in (at a guess) 80% of its components.

We must add Malkuth as the medium which crystallizes the characters of our respective "Selves."

This is all horribly, hatefully difficult to put into words; there is bound to be misunderstanding, however cleverly I concoct the potion. But we understand pretty well for all that, at least so far as is necessary for most practical purposes.

Note: The original key-entry also contained a transcription of a handwritten note which was made completely unintelligible by a number of omissions, either of illegible words or of symbols which could not be rendered in ASCII. It ran thusly:

{The following note in handwriting may be a proper element of the text. This

will be cross-check from available materials:}

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{The following note in handwriting may be a proper element of the text. This
will be cross-check from available materials:}


*  0 = 2  Because 2 comes from 0 --- itself is .... ---
2 High ... issue from Kether the Crown
under .....                .......      the  Book of Thoth.
thus Nuit ...          ...     Hadit --- and as you
said yourself, ...     she ....  --- never
```

1: Probably “heroin and cocaine” – T.S.

Chapter 43

The Holy Guardian Angel is not the “Higher Self” but an Objective Individual

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

On going over some recent letters I see that you question abut William Gillette and the Angels was indeed “a red-hot two-prong that you stick to hiss i' the soft of” me. You meant not only to inquire into the order of being to which angels belong, but as to whether they are liable to accident, misfortune and the like.

The answer is that it depends on the Angel—for the purposes of this letter I propose to use the word “angel” to include all sorts of disembodied beings, from demons to gods—in all cases, they are *objective*; a subjective “angel” is different from a dream only in non-essentials.

Now, some angels are actually emanations of the elements, planets, or signs to which they are attributed. They are partial beings in very much the same way as are animals. They are not microcosms as are men and women. They are almost entirely composed of the planet (or what- ever it is) to which they are attributed. The other components of their being I take to be almost accidental. For example, the Archangel Ratziel is lord of a company of angels called Auphanim; and one must not imagine that all these angels are identical with one another, or there would not seem to be much sense in it. They have some sort of composition, some sort of individuality; and the character and appearance of the Angel can be determined by its name.

I do not think that I have anywhere mentioned how this is done. To take an example, let us have Qedemel—the Hebrew letters as Q.D.M.A.L, and the numeration is 175, which is that of the sum of the 1st 49 numbers, as is proper to

Venus.**1** We may then expect the head or head-dress of the spirit to be in some way characteristic of the Sign of Pisces. The general form of the body will be indicated by the Daleth, the letter of Venus, and the lower part (or perhaps the quality) will be determined by the watery Mem—The termination Aleph Lamed is usually taken to indicate appropriate symbols. For instance, the Aleph might show a golden aura, and the Lamed a pair of balances. Some further detail might be indicated by taking the letters Daleth and Mem together, for Dam is the Hebrew word for blood. From such considerations one can build up a pictorial representation in one's mind which may serve as a standard to which any appearance of him should more or less conform.**2** The question then takes the form of inquiry into how far such beings are immortal or eternal.

In the above case, evidently his existence depends on that of the planet Venus; and one might suppose that, if that planet were stricken from the solar system, there would be no more Qedemel. But this is to judge too rashly; for Venus himself is only an emanation of the number 7, and is therefore indestructible. {Handwritten note: Because she-he comes from … who is [triangle] + [square], 3 + 4}

It is some such idea as the above which is at the back of the conventional idea that elementals are immortal, that they incur mortality when their ambition and devotion causes them to incarnate as human beings. (Is this achieved by some sort of marriage with a reincarnating Ego? Or how? All this is very obscure; we need more evidence.)

You will doubtless have read in many Eastern stories of the destruction of dryads or Nats by the cutting down of the tree in which they have made their habitation. A nymph, similarly, would be destroyed if her fountain were to dry up.

Now, can an angel of this sort ever go wrong, by which one must mean, can he ever be untrue to his own nature? I do not see how one can imagine this to happen; for they are so completely creatures of the elements of which they are composed that they must be regarded as completely devoid of will in any intelligible sense of the word. Their actions in fact are merely re-actions.

They are, of course, entirely lacking in the Supernal Triad. There is therefore no question of anything in them which would persist through change. Perhaps it would be better to say that changed does not really affect them. Another way to put it would be that they are adjectives, not nouns. They are merely sensible manifestations of the elements to which they are attributed, and to the letters of their name.

Now, on the other hand, there is an entirely different type of angel; and here we must be especially careful to remember that we include gods and devils, for there are such beings who are not by any means dependent one one particular element for their existence. They are microcosms in exactly the same sense as men and women are. They are individuals who have picked up the elements of their composition as possibility and convenience dictates, exactly as we do ourselves. I want you to understand that a goddess like Astarte, Astaroth, Cotytto, Aphrodite, Hathoor, Venus, are not merely aspects of the planet;* they are separate individuals who have been identified with each other, and attributed to Venus merely because the salient feature in their character approximates to this ideal.

Now then, it is simple to answer the question of their development, their growing old and dying; for, being of the same order of Nature as we are ourselves, almost anything which is true of us is true also of them.

* "Venus" is, of course, a "thing-in-itself;" the planet merely one case of the idea.

I have tended rather to elaborate this theme, because of the one personally important question which arises in more recent letters; for I believe that the Holy Guardian Angel is a Being of this order. He is something more than a man, possibly a being who has already passed through the stage of humanity, and his peculiarly intimate relationship with his client is that of friendship, of community, of brotherhood, or Fatherhood. He is not, let me say with emphasis, a mere abstraction from yourself; and that is why I have insisted rather heavily that the term "Higher Self" implies "a damnable heresy and a dangerous delusion."

It it were not so, there would be no point in *The Sacred Magic of Abramelin the Mage*.

Apart from any theoretical speculation, my Sammasiti and analytical work has never led to so much as a hint of the existence of the Guardian Angel. He is not to be found by any exploration of oneself. It is true that the process of analysis leads finally to the realization of oneself as no more than a point of view indistinguishable *in itself* from any other point of view; but the Holy Guardian Angel is in precisely the same position. However close may be the identities in millions of ways, no complete identification is ever obtainable.

But do remember this, above all else; they are objective, not subjective, or I should not waste good Magick on them.

Let me say in particular in regard to Gods, that the God Jupiter whom you invoke is not necessarily the same as he whom I invoke. It is clear in any case that the revelation of himself to you is modified in many ways by your own particular sensitiveness; just as in ordinary life, your idea of a friend may be very different from my own conception of the same individual. Suppose, for example, he happens to be a musician, there will be an entire side of his character to which I am practically insensitive. You could talk to him for hours, and I would understand little or nothing of what was said. Similarly, if he were a mountaineer, it would be your turn to be odd man out.

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

1: *Sic*. The sum of the first forty-nine natural numbers is 1225 which is thus the fourth "magic number" of Venus; 175 is the third, being 1225 ÷ 7, hence the sum of the numbers on each row of the "magic square" of Venus – T.S.

2: This is basically Golden Dawn teaching, with slight elaborations by Crowley – T.S.

Chapter 44

“Serious” Style of A.C., or the Apparent Frivolity of Some of my Remarks

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Alas! It is unlikely that either you or I should come upon a copy of Max Beerbohm's portrait of Mathew Arnold; but Raven Hill's famous cartoon is history, and can be told as such without the illustration.

We shall have to go into the matter, because of your very just criticism of my magical writings in general—and these letters, being colloquial, are naturally an extreme case.

Far-off indeed those sunny days when life in England was worth living; when one could travel anywhere in Europe—except Russia and Turkey, which spiritually, at least, are in Asia—or America, without a pass- port; when we complained that closing time was twelve-thirty a.m.; when there was little or no class bitterness, the future seemed secure, and only Nonconformists failed to enjoy the fun that bubbled up on every side.

Well, in those days there were Music-halls; I can't hope to explain to you what they were like, but they were *jolly*. (I'm afraid that there's another word beyond the scope of your universe!) At the Empire, Leicester Square, which at that time actually looked as if it had been lifted bodily from the “Continong” (a very wicked place) there was a promenade, with bars complete (*drinking* bars, my dear child, I blush to say) where one might hope to find “strength and beauty met together, Kindle their image like a star in a sea of glassy weather.” There one might always find London's “soiled doves” (as they revoltingly called them in the papers) of

every type: Theodora (celebrated “Christian” Empress) and Phryne, Messalina and Thais, Baudelaire's swarthy mistress, and Nana, Moll Flanders and Fanny Hill.

But the enemies of life were on guard. They saw people enjoying themselves, (shame!) and they raked through the mildewed parchments of obsolete laws until they found some long-forgotten piece of mischief that might stop it. The withered husks of womanhood, idle, frustrated, spiteful and malignant, called up their forces, blackmailed the Church into supporting them, and began a senseless string of prosecutions.

Notable in infamy stands out he name of Mrs. Ormiston Chant.

So here we had the trial of some harmless girl for “accosting;” it was a scene from this that inspired Raven Hill's admirable cartoon.

A “pale young curate” is in the witness box. “The prisoner,” he drawled “made improper proposals to me. The actual words used were: “why do you look so sad, Bertie?"”

The magistrate: “A very natural question!”

Now, fifty years later, here am I in the dock.

(“How can you expect people to take your Magick seriously!” I hear from every quarter, “when you write so gleefully about it, with your tongue always in your cheek?”)

My dear good sister, do be logical!

Here am I who set out nigh half a century ago to seek “The Stone of the Wise, the Summum Bonum, True Wisdom and Perfect Happiness:“ I get it, and you expect me to look down a forty-inch nose and lament!

I have plenty of trouble in life, and often enough I am in low enough spirits to please anybody; but turn my thoughts to Magick—the years fall off. I am again the gay, quick, careless boy to whom the world was gracious.

Let this serve for an epitaph: Gray took eleven years; I, less.

Elegy Written in a Country Farmyard

By
Cock-a-doodle-doo

Here lies upon this hospitable spot
A youth to flats and flatties unknown;
The Plymouth Brethren gave it to him hot;
Trinity, Cambridge, claimed him for her own.

He climbed a lot of mountains in his time
He stalked the tiger, bear and elephant.
He wrote a stack of poems, some sublime,
Some not. Tales, essays, pictures, plays my aunt!

At chess a minor master, Hoylake set
His handicap at two. Love drove him crazy.
Three thousand women used to call him pet;
In other matters—shall we call him "lazy"?

He had the gift of laughing at himself;
Most affably he walked and talked with God;
And now the silly bastard's on the shelf,
We'll bury him beneath another sod.

In all the active moods of Nature—her activity is Worship! there is an element of rejoicing; even when she is at her wildest and most destructive. (You know Gilbert's song "When the tiger is a-lashing of his tail"?) Her sadness always goes with the implied threat of cessation—and that we know to be illusion.

There is nothing worse in religion, especially in the Wisdom-Religion, than the pedagogic-horatory accents of the owlish dogmatist, unless it be the pompous self-satisfaction of the prig. Eschew it, sister, eschew it!

Even in giving orders there is a virile roar, and the commander who is best obeyed is he who rages cheerfully like an Eights Coach or a Rugger Captain. "Up Guards and at 'em!" may not be authentic; but that is the right spirit.

The curate's twang, the solemnity of self-importance, all manners that do not disclose the real man, are abominations, "Anathema Maranatha"—or any other day of the week. These painted masks are devised to conceal chicanery or emptiness. The easy-going humorous style of Vivekananda is intelligible and instructive; the platitudinous hot potatoes of Waite are neither. The dreadful thing is that this assumption of learning, of holiness, of mysterious avenging powers, somehow deceives the average student. He does not realise how well and wisely such have conned Wilde's maxim: "To be intelligible is to be found out."

I know that I too am at times obscure; I lament the fact. The reason is twofold: (a) my ineradicable belief that my reader knows all about the subject better than I do myself, and (at best) may like to hear it tackled from a novel angle, (b) I am carried away by the exultant exaltation of my theme: I boil over with rapture—not the crystal-clear, the cool solution that I aimed at.

On the Path of the Wise there is probably no danger more deadly, no poison more pernicious, no seduction more subtle than Spiritual Pride; it strikes, being solar, at the very heart of the Aspirant; more, it is an inflation and exacerbation of the Ego, so that its victim runs the peril of straying into a Black Lodge, and finding himself at home there.

Against this risk we look to our insurance; there are two infallible: Common Sense and the Sense of Humour. When you are lying exhausted and exenterate after the attainment of Vishvarupadarshana it is all wrong to think: "Well, now I'm the holiest man in the world, of course with the exception of John M. Watkins;" better recall the words of the weary sceptical judge in A. P. Herbert's *Holy Deadlock*; he makes a Mantram of it! "I put it to you—I put it to you—I put it to you—that you *have* got a boil on your bottom."

To this rule there is, as usual with rules, an exception. Some states of mind are of the same structure as poetry, where the "one step from the sublime to the ridiculous" is an easy and fatal step. But even so, pedantry is as bad as ribaldry. Personally, I have tried to avoid the dilemma by the use of poetic language and form; for instance, in *AHA!*

It is all difficult, dammed difficult; but if it must be that one's most sacred shrine be profaned, let it be the clean assault of laughter rather than the slimy smear of sactimoniousness!

There, or thereabouts, we must leave it. "Out of the fullness of the heart the mouth speaketh;" and I cannot sing the words of an epithalamium to the music of a dirge.

Besides, what says the poet? "Love's at its height in pure love? Nay, but after When the song's light dissolves gently in laughter."

Oh! "One word more" as Browning said, and poured forth the most puerile portentous piffle about that grim blue-stocking "interesting invalid," his spouting wife. Here it is, mercifully much shorter, and *not* in tripping trochees!

"Actions speak louder than words." (I positively leak proverbs this afternoon—country air, I suppose): and where actions are the issue, devil a joke from Aleister!

Do you see what is my mark? It is you that I am going to put in the dock about "being serious;" and that will take a separate letter—part of the answer to yours received March 10th, 1944 and in general to your entire course of conduct since you came to me—now over a year ago.**1**

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally yours,

666

1: See Chapter XLV.

Chapter 45

“Unserious” Conduct of a Pupil

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Here pops us Zola again—this time he says *J'Accuse*! Today's Hexagram for me is No. X. Lî, the Tiger: and the Duke of Chau comments on the last line as follows: “The sixth line, undivided, tells us to look at the whole course that is trodden, and examine the presage which that gives. If it be complete and without failure, there will be great good fortune.” O.K.; Let's!

It is now well over a year since you came to me howling like a damned soul in torment—and so you should be!—and persuaded me to take you as my pupil. What have you done with that year?

. . . .

First, suppose we put down what you agreed to do: The essential preliminaries of the work of the A∴ A∴—you are to be heartily congratulated upon your swift perception that the principles of that august body were absolute.

1. Prepare and submit your Magical Record. (Without this you are in the position of a navigator with neither chart nor log.) It would have been quite easy to get this ready in a week. Have you done so in a year? No.

2. Learn to construct and perfect the Body of Light. This might have required anything up to a dozen personal lessons. You were urged to claim priority upon my time. What did you do?

You made one experiment with me fairly satisfactory, and got full instructions for practice and experiment at home.

You made one experiment, ignoring every single one of the recommendations made to you.

You kept on making further appointments for a second personal lesson; and every one of them you broke.

3. Begin simple Yoga practices.

This, of course, cannot be checked at all in the absence of a careful record and of instructed critical analysis. You do not make the one, and are incapable of the other. So I suppose you are very well satisfied with yourself!

4. Your O.T.O. work.

You were supplied with copies of those rituals to which you were entitled.

You were to make copies of these.

You were to go through them with me, so as to assimilate their Symbolism and teaching.

Have you done any of this? No.

5. You were to write me a letter of questions once every fortnight.

Have you done so? No.

. . . .

Have you in thirteen months done as much as honest work would have accomplished in a week? No.

. . . .

What excuses do you drag out, when taxed with these misdemeanors?

You are eager to make appointments to be received in audience; then you break them without warning, explanation, apology or regret.

You are always going to have ample time to devote to the Great Work; but that time is always somewhere after the middle of next week.

If you put half as much enthusiasm into what you quite rightly claim to be the most important factor in life as other old ladies do into Culbertson Contract, you might get somewhere.

What you need, in the way of a Guru, is some fat, greasy Swami, who would not allow you to enter or leave his presence without permission, or address him

without being formally invited to do so. After seven years at menial household drudgeries, you might with luck be allowed to listen to some of his improving discourse.

Pretentious humbug is the only appeal to which you can be relied on to respond. Praxiteles would repel you, unless you covered the marble completely with glittering gew-gaws, tinsel finery, sham jewels from the tray of Autolycus! Yet it was precisely because you were sick of all this that you came to me at all.

How can one take you as a serious student? Only because you do have moments when the scales fall from your eyes, and your deep need tears down the tawdry counterfeits which hide the shrine where Isis stands unveiled—but ah! too far. You must advance.

To advance—that means Work. Patient, exhausting, thankless, often bewildering Work. Dear sister, if you would but Work! Work blindly, foolishly, misguidedly, it doesn't matter in the end: Work in itself has absolute virtue.

But for you, having got so far in this incarnation, there must be a revolution. You must no longer hesitate, no longer plan; you must leap into the dark, and leap at once.

"The Voice of my Higher Soul said unto me: Let me enter the Path of Darkness; peradventure thus I may attain the Light."**1**

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally yours,

666

P.S. Let me adduce an example of the way in which the serious Aspirant bends to the oar. This is not boasting as if the facts denoted superlative excellence; they speak. The only comment is that if such conduct is not normal and universal, it ought to be. Yet no! I would add this: that I have not yet heard of anyone who has attained to any results of importance who does not attribute his success to devotion of quite similar quality.

Here they are:

1. *The Cloud on the Sanctuary*. On reading this book, Mr. X.,**2** who was desperate from the conviction that no success in life was worth a tinker's *dam*, decided: "This

is the answer to my problem; the members of the Secret Fraternity which this book describes have solved the riddle of life. I must discover them, and seek to be received amongst them."

2. X., hearing a conversation in a café which made him think that the speaker**3** might be such an one as he sought, hunted him down—he had gone on his travels—caught him, and made him promise an interview at the earliest possible date.

3. This interview leading to an introduction to the Fraternity, he joined it, pledging his fealty. But he was grievously shocked, and nearly withdrew, when assured: "There is nothing in this Oath which might conflict in any way with your civil, moral or religious obligations." If it was *not* worth while becoming a murderer, a traitor, and an eternally damned soul, why bother about it? was his attitude.

The Head of the Fraternity**4** being threatened with revolt, X. when to him, in circumstances which jeopardised his own progress, and offered his support "to the last drop of my blood, and the last penny of my purse."

Deciding to perform a critical Magical Operation,**5** and being warned that serious opposition might come from his own friends, family, etc., he abandoned his career, changed his name, cut himself off completely from the past, and allowed no alien interest of any sort to interfere with his absorption in the Work. His journey to see the Head seemed at that time a fatal interruption; at the least, it involved the waste of one whole year. He was wrong; his gesture of setting the interests of the Order before his personal advancement was counted unto him for righteousness.

. . . .

There should be no need to extend this list; it could be continued indefinitely. X. had one rule of life, and one only; to do whatever came first on the list of agenda, and never to count the cost.

Because this course of conduct was so rigidly rational, it appeared to others irrational and incalculable; because it was so serenely simple, it appeared an insoluble mystery of a complexity utterly unfathomable!

But—I fear that you are only too likely to ask—is not this system (*a*) absurd, (*b*) wrong, as certain in the long run to defeat its own object.

Well, as to (*a*), everything is absurd. The Universe is not constructed to gratify the mania of "social planners" and their tedipus kind. As to (*b*), there you said something; the refutation will lead us to open a new chapter. Ought not X. to have laid down a comprehensive scheme, and worked out the details, so that he would not break down half-way through for lack of foresight and provision for emergencies?

An example. Suppose that the next step in his Work involved the sacrifice of a camel in a house in Tooting Bec, furnished in such fashion as his Grimoire laid down, and that the purchase of the house left him without resources to buy that furniture, to say nothing of the camel. What a fool!

No, that does not necessarily follow. If the Gods will the End, They also will the means. I shall do all that is possible to me by buying the house: I shall leave it to Them to do Their share when the time comes.

This "Act of Truth" is already a Magical Formula of infallible puissance; the man who is capable of so thinking and acting is far more likely to get what he wanted from the Sacrifice—when at long last the Camel appears on the premises—then he who, having ample means to carry out the whole Operation without risk of failure, goes through the ceremony without ever having experienced a moment's anxiety about his ability to bring it to a successful conclusion.

It think personally that the error lies in *calculating*. The injunction is "to buy the egg of a perfectly black hen without haggling." You have no means of judging what is written in Their ledger; so "…reason is a lie; … & all their words are skew-wise…." AL II, 32.

Let me add that it is a well-attested fact of magical experience—beginning with Tarquin and the Sibylline books!—as well as a fact of profane psychology, that if you funk a fence, it is harder next time. If the boy falls off the pony, put him on again at once: if the young airman crashes, send him up again without a minute's avoidable delay. If you don't, their nerve is liable to break for good and all.

I am not saying that this policy is invariably successful; your judgment may have misled you as to the necessity of the Operation which loomed so large at the moment. And so on; plenty of room for blunders!

But it is a thousand times better to make every kind of mistake than to slide into the habit of hesitation, of uncertainty, of indecision.

For one thing, you acquire also the habit of dishonourable failure; and you very soon convince yourself that “the whole thing is nonsense.” Confidence comes from exercise, from taking risks, from picking yourself up after a purler; finding that the maddest gambles keep oncoming off, you begin to suspect that there is no more than Luck in it; you observe this closely, and there forms, in the dusk dimly, a Shape; very soon you see a Hand, and from its movements you divine a Brain behind the whole contrivance.

“Good!” you say quietly, with a determined nod; “I'm watched, I'm helped: I'll do my bit; the rest will come about without my worrying or meddling.”

And so it is.

Good-night.

666

1: The quote is from the Golden Dawn Neophyte ritual – T.S.

2: Crowley is talking about himself, as usual – T.S.

3: Julian Baker, a member of the Golden Dawn – T.S.

4: S.L. “MacGregor” Mathers – T.S.

5: The reference is to the Abramelin operation – T.S.

Chapter 56

Selfishness

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Selfishness? I am glad to find you worrying that bone, for it has plenty of meat on it; fine juicy meat, none of your Chilled Argentine or Canterbury lamb. It is a pelvis, what's more; for in a way the whole structure of the ethics of Thelema is founded upon it. There is some danger here; for the question is a booby trap for the noble, the generous, the high-minded.

"Selflessness," the great characteristic of the Master of the Temple, the very quintessence of his attainment, is not its contradictory, or even its contrary; it is perfectly compatible (nay, shall we say friendly?) with it.

The Book of the Law has plenty to say on this subject, and it does not mince its words.

"First, text; sermon, next," as the poet says.

AL II, 18, 19, 20, 21.:

"These are dead, these fellows; they feel not. We are not for the poor and sad: the lords of the earth are our kinsfolk.

"Is a God to live in a dog? No! but the highest are of us. They shall rejoice, our chosen: who sorroweth is not of us.

"Beauty and strength, leaping laughter and delicious languor, force and fire, are of us.

"We have nothing with the outcast and the unfit: let them die in their misery. For they feel not. Compassion is the vice of kings: stamp down the wretched & the weak: this is the law of the strong: this is our law and the joy of the world. …"

That sets up a standard, with a vengeance!

(Note "they feel not," twice repeated. There should be something important to the thesis herein concealed.)

The passage becomes exalted, but a verse later resumes the theme, setting forth the philosophical basis of these apparently violent and arrogant remarks.

"…It is a lie, this folly against self…." (AL II, 22)

This is the central doctrine of Thelema in this matter. What are we to understand by it? That this imbecile and nauseating cult of weakness— democracy some call it—is utterly false and vile.

Let us look into the matter. (First consult AL II, 24, 25, 48, 49, 58, 59. and III, 18, 58, 59. It might be confusing to quote these texts in full; but they throw much further light on the subject.) The word "compassion" is its accepted sense—which is bad etymology—implies that you are a fine fellow, and the other so much dirt; that is, you insult him by pity for his misfortunes. But "Every man and every woman is a star."; so don't you do it! You should treat everybody as a King of the same order as yourself. Of course, nine people out of ten won't stand for it, not for a minute; the mere fact of your treating them decently frightens them; their sense of inferiority is exacerbated and intensified; they insist on grovelling. That places them. They force you to treat them as the mongrel curs they are; and so everybody is happy!

The Book of the Law is at pains to indicate the proper attitude of one "King" to another. When you fight him, "As brothers fight ye!" Here we have the old chivalrous type of warfare, which the introduction of reason into the business has made at the moment impossible. *Reason* and *Emotion*; these are the two great enemies of the Ethic of Thelema. They are the traditional obstacles to success in Yoga as well as in Magick.

Now in practice, in everyday life, this unselfishness is always cropping up. Not only do you insult your brother King by your "noble self-sacrifice," but you are almost bound to interfere with his True Will. "Charity" always means that the lofty soul who bestows it is really, deep down, trying to enslave the recipient of his beastly bounty!

In practice, I begin afresh, it is almost entirely a matter of the point of view. That poor chap looks as if a square meal wouldn't hurt him; and you chuck him a half-crown. You offend his pride, you pauperize him, you make a perfect cad of yourself, and you go off with a glow of having done your good deed for the

day. It's all wrong. In such a case, you should make it the request for favour. Say you're "dying for someone to talk to, and would he care to join you in a spot of lunch" at the Ritz, or wherever you feel that he will be the happiest.

When you can do this sort of thing as it should be done, without embarrassment, false shame, with your whole heart in your words—do it *simply*, to sum up—you will find yourself way up on the road to that royal republic which is the ideal of human society.

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

P.S. Let me insist that "pity" is nearly always an impostor. It is the psychic consolation for fear, the "pitiful man" really is a pitiful man! for his is such a coward that he dare not face his fear, even in imagination!

P.P.S. The day after I had written the above postscript I came upon a copy of Graham Greene's *The Ministry of Fear*—after a long search. He points out that pity is a mature emotion; adolescents do not feel it. Exactly; one step further, and he would have reached my own position as set forth above. It is the twin of "moral responsibility," of the sense of guilt or sin. The Hebrew fable of Eden and the "Fall" is clearly constructed. But remember that the serpent Nechesh {Nun-Cheth-Shin} is equivalent to Messiach, {Mem-Shin-Yod-Cheth}, the Messiah. The M is the "Hanged Man," the sinner; and is redeemed by the insertion of the Phallic Yod.

P.P.P.S. An amusing coincidence. Just as I was polishing up this letter the lady whom I had just engaged to help me with some of my work irritated me to the point when my screams became so heartrending that the village will never sleep again as smoothly as its wont. They split the welkin in several places; and although invisible menders were immediately put on the job it is generally felt that it will never more be its original wholeness.

And why? Just because of her anxiety to please! She asked me if she might do something; I said "Yes;" she then went on begging for my consent, explaining why she had made the request, apologizing for her existence!

She could not understand that all she had to do was to try and please herself—the highest part of herself—to be assured of my full satisfaction.

P.P.P.P.S. “But the A∴ A∴ oath; aren't you—we—all out to improve the race, not counting the cost to ourselves!”

Pure selfishness, child, with foresight! I want a decent place to live in next time I come back. And a longer choice of firstrate vehicles for my Work.

Chapter 47

Reincarnation

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Don't I think I ought to write a book on the Four Last Things, or summat? I do not. What's more, I'll see you in Yorkshire's most important seaport first.

But all the same you are within your rights when you insist on knowing if I believe in Reincarnation; and, if so why; and how do I feel about it. In other letters there is quite a lot of detail about the constitution of Man, and there is my Essay No. 1, in Little Essays Toward Truth; you had better get these well fixed in your mind, in case some of what now follows should prove obscure. I can't be bothered to define all the technical terms all over again.

Do I believe in it?

Yes.

Why?

(1) Because I remember a dozen or so of my previous lives on earth. (See *Magick*, Chapter VI.)

(2) Because no other theory satisfies my feeling for "justesse," for equilibrium, for Newton's Third Law of Motion.

(3) Because every religion asserts, or at least implies, it in some sense of other.

Even the Judaism—Christianity—Islam line of thought contains some such element. The Jews were always expecting Elias to return; the disciples of Christ constantly asked questions involving it; and I feel that the Mohammedan doctrine of Antichrist and the Judgment at least toys with the idea. Were I not so ignorant, I could dig up all sorts of support for this thesis. But it doesn't matter so much in any case; we do not trouble to find "authority;" we put our shirts on Experience.

Now as to (1) what is evidence for me is hearsay for you; so forget it! But there is a clear method of obtaining these memories for yourself. See Liber Thisharb (*Magick*, pp. 415 - 422); and go to it!

As to (2) it seems to me fairly obvious. The doctrine of Karma is plain common sense; and although a terrestrial set of causes might conceivably have their effects in other spheres of action, as of course they do, it seems less trouble for them to remain in their original ambit. As I pointed out long ago, the Law of Karma is the Law of Inertia.

Nor is it necessary to assert that it always works out in this way; "sometimes" is quite good enough. Besides, to say "sometimes" explains (or rather, avoids) most of the evident objections to the theory. I grant you cheerfully that Reincarnation is a comparatively rare occurrence; and it throws upon the objector the onus of proving an A or an E proposition.**1**

What is it that reincarnates? We have had this before, in another connection; it is the Supernal Triad of Jechidah, Chiah and Neschamah that clothes the original Hadit or Point-of-View, with as much of the Ruach as the Human Consciousness, Tiphareth, has been able during a given life to attach to itself by dint of persistent Aspiration. If there is not enough Ruach to ensure an adequate quota of Memories, one could never become conscious of the continuity between one life and the next.

Briefly, the orthodox theory as put forth by H.P.B. is that one works off one's Karma after death in Devachan, or Kama Loka, or some such place; when the balance is exhausted, one may come back to earth, or in some other way carry on the Great Work. One theory—see Opus Lutetianum, the *Paris Working*—says that when one has quite finished with Earth-problems, one is promoted to Venus, where "bodies" are liquid, and thence to Mercury, where they are gaseous, finally to the Sun, where they are composed of pure Fire. Eliphaz Lévi says: "In the Suns we remember; in the planets we forget."

Most of this is he merest speculation, useless and possibly harmful; but I don't mind relaxing occasionally to that extent.

What is important is the Oath.

One who is vowed to the A∴A∴'s Mission for Mankind, who takes it dead seriously, and who will be neither frightened nor bored from Its majestic purpose, may at any time bind himself by an Oath to reject the rewards of Devachan, and reincarnate immediately again and again. By "immediately" is meant about 6

months before the birth of the new Adept, about 3 months after his last death. It depends to some extent, no doubt, on whether he can find a suitable vehicle. Presumably he will make some sort of o preparation while still alive. It seems that I personally must have taken this Oath quite a long while ago; for the Incarnations which I actually remember leave very few gaps to be filled in the last dozen centuries or so.

Now, dear sister, I don't like this letter at all, and I am sorry that I had to write it. For most of these statements are insusceptible of proof.

And yet I *feel* their truth much more strongly than I have ventured to express. How many times have I warned you against "feelings?"

Love is the law, love under will.

Note: In the original a lengthy excerpt from Liber ThIShARB (CMXIII), from section 27 to end, was appended to this letter. It is here omitted; the entire work may be studied here.

1: From the context it appears Crowley means a universal (for all *x*, f(*x*)) or negative existential (there is no *x* such that f(*x*)), in which case we should perhaps real "an A or ~E proposition." The point is that on any empirical matter (as opposed to, say, mathematical expressions which can be proved by induction) to prove such a proposition involves examining every possible *x* to find out whether or not f(*x*) — T.S.

Chapter 48

Morals of *AL*—Hard to Accept, and Why nevertheless we Must Concur

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

No man alive can appreciate better than myself the difficulties connected with The Book of the Law.

You ask me, if I have rightly analysed your somewhat complicated series of questions, to advise you as to your attitude towards that Book.

Naturally, if you wished for detailed explanations, I could no more than refer you to that voluminous commentary, verse by verse, which still awaits publication.**1** But I think I can sum up the main business in a letter of not too exorbitant length.

To begin: the Author is quite certainly both more than human, and other than human.

His main aim seems to me to announce the Magical Formula of the Aeon of Horus, and to lay down the fundamental principles of conduct that are consistent with it.

I put this first, because your troubles belong to this part of the Book.

But let me sort out the principal parts of it.

(1) There is a system of the most sublime philosophy which stands altogether apart from any Aeon, or from any other limited condition.

(2) There is a considerable proportion of the contents which appears to refer to "The Beast" and "The Scarlet Woman" personally; but these titles may be assumed

to refer to any one who happens to hold either of those offices during the whole period of the Aeon—approximately 2000 years.

(3) The sex morality of the Book is not very different from that maintained secretly by aristocrats since the world began. It is the system natural to any one who has psycho-analysed away all his complexes, repressions, fixations and phobias.

(4) As matriarchy reflected the Formula of the Aeon of Isis, and patriarchy that of Osiris, so does the rule of the "Crowned and Conquering Child" express that of Horus. The family, the clan, the state count for nothing; the Individual is the Autarch.

(5) The Book announces a new dichotomy in human society; there is the master and there is the slave; the noble and the serf; the "lone wolf" and the herd.[1)]

(Nietzsche may be regarded as one of our prophets; to a much less extent, de Gobineau.) Hitler's "Herrenvolk" is a not too dissimilar idea; but there is no volk about it; and if there were, it would certainly not be the routine-looving, uniformed-obsessed, law-abiding, refuge-seeking German; the Briton, especially the Celt, a natural anarchist, is much nearer the mark. Britons will never get together about anything unless and until each one of them feels himself directly threatened.

Now here I must tell you a story which may throw a good deal of light on much that is obscure in the political situation of '25 to date. The venerable lady (S.H. Soror I.W.E. 8° = 3□**2**) who, on the death of S.H. Frater 8° = 3□ Otto Gebhardi, succeeded him as my representative in Germany (note that all this pertains to the A∴ A∴; the O.T.O. is not directly concerned) attained the Grade of Hermit (AL I, 40). Watching the situation in Europe, she became constantly more convinced that Adolf Hitler was her "Magical child;" and she conceived it to be her duty to devote her life (for the Hermit "gives only of his Light unto men") to his Magical Education. Knowing that the hegemony of the world would fall to the nation that first accepted the Law of Thelema, she made haste to put the *Book of the Law* in the hands of her "child." Upon him it most undoubtedly made the deepest impression, especially as she swore him most solemnly to secrecy as to the source of his power. (Obviously, he would not wish to share it with other.). From time to time, when circumstances suggested it, she wrote to him, enclosing pertinent sections of my commentary, of which I had given her a copy at the time of the "Zeugnis."[2)]

Had Hitler been a less abnormal character, no great "Mischief," or at least a very different kind of "mischief," might have come of it. I think you have read *Hitler speaks*—if not, do so—his private conversation abounds in what sound almost like actual quotations from the *Book of the Law*. But he public man's private conversation can be repeated on the platform only at the risk of his political life; and he served up to the people only such concoctions as would tickle their gross palates. Worse still, he was the slave of his prophetic frenzy; he had not undertaken the balancing regimen of the Curriculum of A∴A∴; and, worst of all, he was very far indeed from being a full initiate, even in the loosest sense of the term. His Weltanschauung was accordingly a mass of personal and political prejudice; he had no true cosmic comprehension, no true appreciation of First Principles; and he was tossed about in every direction by the varied conflicting forces that naturally concentrated their energies ever more strenuously upon him as his personal position became more and more the dominating factor, first in domestic and then in European politics. I warned our S.H. Soror repeatedly that she ought to correct these tendencies; but she already saw the success of her plans within her grasp, and refused to believe that this success itself would alarm the world into combining to destroy him. "But we have the Book," she confidently retorted, failing to see that the other powers in extremity would be compelled to adopt those identical principles. Of course, as you know, it has happened as I foresaw; only a remnant of piety-purefied Prelates and sloppy sentimentalists still hold out against the *Book of the Law*, sabotage the victory, and will turn the Peace into a shambles of surrender if we are fools enough to give ear to their caterwauling—as in the story of the highly-esteemed tomcat, when at last one of his fans obtained an interview; "all he could do was to talk about his operation."

Has this digression seemed too long? Ah, but it isn't a digression. Rightly considered, it strikes at the heart of your "difficulties."

"The *Book of the Law* takes us back to primitive savagery," you say. Well, where are we?

We're at Guernica, Lidice, Oradour-sur-Glane, Rotterdam and hundreds of other crimes, to say nothing of Concentration-camp, Stalag, and a million lesser horrors and abominations, inconceivable by the most diseased and inflamed Sadistic imagination forty years ago.

You disagree with Aiwass—so do all of us. The trouble is that He can say: "But I'm not arguing; I'm telling you."

Now then let us look a little more deeply (and I hope more clearly) into his Ethics, with our minds undismayed by any human emotion.

Aiwass is of a different *Order* of Being from ourselves. Consider a gold-refiner. "Analysis shows 20 % of copper in this sample; I'll beat it in a current of oxygen; that will oxidize the copper. Shake it up with sulphuric acid; then we wash away the copper sulphate, and that's that." He does not consider how the copper feels about it; indeed, he doesn't believe that the copper knows about it at all.

Yes, yes, of course; I know that's an extreme case. I only bring it in to sow what could be done as a last resort, if pushed to the wall. Fortunately, we are not so ill situated. You will, I dare say, without my prompting, think of the surgeon and the schoolmaster; but I can go one better. We have in recent history a case almost precisely parallel.

How did I begin this letter? By defining the task of the Author: to announce the Magical Formula of the Aeon of Horus and so on. In other words, to train mankind to the use of a new source of power.

Page Professor Röntgen! Page the Curies!

How many "Martyrs to X-ray dermatitis?" Willing experimenters who knew the risks? Not all of them; lots of patients got burnt in utmost agony of death. How many victims were there of the "radium bomb?" (At Guy's, wasn't it?) It always has to happen, even with well tried tools, and despite utmost precautions. How many workmen's lives did the Forth Bridge cost? You know, I suppose, that a certain number of fatal accidents are always included in the calculations of any project of Public Works.

But a new Magical Formula is on a vastly bigger scale. Cast your mind for a moment back to the last occasion, when Osiris succeeded to Isis. In that great cataclysm not only Empires, but civilizations crashed one after another. Three quarters of the Aeon had elapsed before the wine of that vintage was really drinkable.

I expect as I hope that this time (communication being universally better established, the foundations better laid, and things in general moving quicker) we may be able to enjoy the harvest in very much less time. But hang it all! it's hardly reasonable to expect complete fruition after only 40 years.

What seems to me the most encouraging symptom of all is this: the Book itself, and the system of Magick based thereon, and the bankruptcy of all previous systems (as set forth in *Eight Lectures on Yoga*, *Magick*, *The Book of Thoth*, and other similar works) do furnish us all with a clear, concise practical *Method* (free from all contamination of the humbug of faith and superstition) whereby any one of us may attain to "the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel," and that the many other Beings of intelligence and power indefinitely more exalted than anything which we recognize as human—and, let us hope, capable of bestowing upon us a modicum of Wisdom adequate to get us out of the quagmire into which the crisis has temporarily plunged us all!

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally yours,

666

P.S. It has seemed better to make a postscript of the most important argument of all; for it is completely separate. It is this.

The Book's meaning is "…not only in the English…" etc. (AL I, 36; I, 46; I, 54, 55; II, 76; III, 16; III, 39; III, 47; III, 63-68; and III, 73). These passages make it clear that there is a secret interpretation, which, being hidden as it is hidden, is presumably of even graver importance than the text as it stands. Such passages as I have been able to decipher confirm this view; so also does the discovery of the key number 31 by Frater Achad.**3** We must also expect a genius to arise who will accomplish all this work for us. Again we know that much information of the utmost value has been given through the Hebrew, the Greek and very probably the Arabic Qabalah.

There is only one logical conclusion of these premises. We know (a) the Book means more than it appears to mean, (b) this inner meaning may modify, or even reverse, the outer meaning, (c) what we do understand convinces us that the Author of the Book is indeed what he claims to be; and, therefore, we must accept the Book as the Canon of Truth, seeking patiently for further enlightenment.

This last point is of especial virtue: see AL III, 63-68. The value to you of the Book varies directly with the degree of your own initiation.

1: Various editions published, the most complete being *Magical and Philosophical Commentaries on The Book of the Law* edited by Symonds and Grant (Montreal: 93 Publishing, 1974). The only one readily available at the time

of writing is *The Law is for All* (New Falcon), based on an abridgement made by Louis Wilkinson in the 1940s – T.S.

2: Martha Küntzel.

3: See Achad's *Liber 31*.

Chapter 49

Thelemic Morality

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Right glad am I to hear that thy have so astutely detected the bulk of my remarks on morals as little better than plain sophistry.

“After all,” you tell me, “there is for every one of us an instinct, at least, of what is 'right' and what is wrong,” And it is plain enough that you understand the validity of this sense in itself, in its own right, wholly independent of any Codes or systems whatsoever.

Of what, then, is this instinct the hieroglyph? Our destructive criticism is perfect as regards teleology; nobody knows what to do in order to act “for the best.” Even the greatest Chess Master cannot be sure how his new pet variation will turn out in practice; and the chessboard is surely an admirable type of a limited “universe of discourse” and “field of action.” (I must write you one day about Cause and Effect in magical practice.)

I seem to have started up this rock chimney with the wrong leg! What I am trying to write is a sort of answer to your remark about “Does the end justify the means?” and I had better tackle it straightforwardly.

Cesspools in every theologian's back garden: sewers in every legislator's garden city: there is no end to the literature of the subject. But one point is amusing; the Jesuits have always been accused of answering that question in the affirmative, apparently for no better reason than that their doctrine is unanimously adverse to admitting it. (People are like that! They say that I spent months in Yucatan—the only province in Mexico that I did *not* visit. They say that my home is a Tibetan monastery; and Tibet is almost the only country in East and Central Asia that my feet have never trodden. They say that I lived for years in Capri—the only town in Italy, of those that I know at all, where I spent less than 48 hours.)

The Law of Thelema helps us to deal with this question very simply and succinctly. First, it obviates the need of defining the proper "End;" for with us this becomes identical with the "True Will;" and we are bound to assume that the man himself is the sole arbiter; we *postulate* that his "End" is self-justified.

Then as to his "Means:" as he cannot possibly know for certain whether they are suitable or not, he can only rely on his inherited instincts, his learning, his traditions, and his experience. Of these all but the first lie wholly in the intellectual Sphere, the Ruach, and can accordingly be knocked into any desired shape at will, by dint of a little manipulation: and if Thelema has freed him morally, as it should have done, from all the nonsense of Plato, Manu, Draco, Solon, Paul (with his harpy brood), John Stuart Mill and Kant, he can make his decision with purely objective judgment. (Where would mathematics be if certain solutions were *a priori* inadmissible?) But then, what about that plaguy first weapon in his armoury? It must be these instincts, simply because we have eliminated all the other possibilities.

What are they?

Two are their sources: the spiritual (Neschamah) and the physiological (Nephesch). Note that both these are feminine. They pertain to HÂ, and HÂ, final in Tetragrammaton respectively. That implies that they are, in a sense, imposed on you from the beginning. Of course it is your own higher principles, Yechidah and Chiah, that have saddled you with them; but the "Human Consciousness," being in Tiphareth, cannot control Neschamah at all; and it has to be admirably unified, fortified, and perfected if it is to act efficiently upon Nephesch.

(How exquisitely keen is the Qabalah! How apt, how clear, how simple, how pictorially assimilable are its explanations of the facts of Nature! If you will only learn to use it, to refer your problems to it, you will soon need no Holy Guru!)

In practice, we most of us do act upon Nephesch a great deal. All learning, training, discipline, tend to modify our physiological reactions in a thousand minor manners. A complete branch of Yoga, Hatha Yoga, is occupied with nothing else. And you can have your face "lifted." Apart from this, we nearly all of us attend to matters like our waistline, our hours of sleep, our digestion, or our muscular development. Some men have even taught themselves to reduce the pulse-beat both in rate and in volume: so much so that they have sometimes been credited with the power to stop the heart altogether at will. (Wasn't it Colonel

Somebody—not Blimp—who used to show off to his friends, after dinner? Did it once too often, in any case!)

Neschamah is an entirely different proposition. One of Tiphareth's prime assets is the influence, through the path of "The Lovers," from Binah. The son's milk from the Great Mother. (From his Father, Chiah, Chokmah, he inherits the infinite possibilities of Nuit, through the path of HÂ,, "The Star;" and from his "God," Kether, the Divine Consciousness, the direct inspiration, guidance, and ward of his Holy Guardian Angel, through the path of Gimel, the Moon, "The Priestess.")1

Neschamah, then, will not be influenced by Ruach, except in so far as it is explained or interpreted by Ruach. These "instincts" are implanted from on high, not from below; they would be imperative were one always sure of having received them pure, and interpreted them aright.

But this is a digression, though an essential one; the point is how to decide when one's equation is solved by "a + b," and one feels that "a + b" is abhorrent to one's nature.

Now do you see the point of the digression? By "wrong" we mean anything that evokes dissent or protest from either Neschamah or Nephesch, or both.

People spoke to me, people whose experience and judgment in all matters of Sacrifice to Dionysus had my very fullest assent and admiration; they told me that of all drinks, the best was Beer. So I have wanted for many years to drink it. I can't. I once tasted a few drops on the end of a teaspoon. They told me that wasn't quite the same thing!**2**

That's Nephesch.

I cannot bear to do any unkind action, however wise, necessary, and all the rest of it. I do it, but "it hurts me more than it hurts you" is actually true for me. (This only applies where the other party is unable to retaliate: I love hurting a stout antagonist in a fair fight.)

That's Neschamah.

What one really needs to know is whether the protest of the Instinct should override the decision of the Reason. Obviously, one must assume that both are equally "right;" that one's interpretation of one's Instinct is full and accurate, that one's solution of "how shall I act for the best?" is uniquely correct.

First of all, one is tempted to argue that, that being so, there *can* be no disagreement; that is, on our general Theory of the Universe. True enough! The farther one goes in initiation, the rarer will such incidents become. Even a quite uninitiated person—always provided that Thelema has freed him morally—should find that nine times in ten, the inhibiting antagonism is accidental, or at least apparently irrelevant.

(Notice, please, that our conditions of the "rightness" of both sides are rigid: the usual inhibition is a threat to vanity, or some instinct equally false, and to be weeded out.)

Wilkie Collins has an excellent episode in *Armadale*; his "girl-friend" or wife or somebody wants to poison him, and gives the stuff in brandy, not knowing that the mere smell of it is enough to make him violently sick. So he won't touch it. I'm not sure that I've got this quite right, but you see the idea.

Occasionally it happens that an infinity of minute and meticulous calsulation is necessary to decide between the duellists.

This is the sort of thing.

Suppose that by what is hardly fraud, but "undue influence" (as the lawyers say) I could persuade a dying person to leave me a couple of hundred thousand in his will. I shall use every penny of it for the Great Work; it sounds easy! "Of course! Damn your integrity! Damn *you*! The Work is all that matters."

All the same, I say NO. I should never be the same man again. I should have lost that confidence in myself which is the spine of my work. No need that the fraud should be discovered openly: it would appear in all my subsequent work, a subtle contamination.

But suppose that it were not the matter of gulling a moribund half-wit; suppose that the price was a straightforward honest-to-God Bank Robbery under arms on the highway, should I hesitate then? Here I should risk my head, and the dice are loaded against me; nor does the deed imply "moral turpitude." Stalin's associates regarded him as a martyred hero when the law of the country, less cogent that Thelema, sat heavily on his devoted head.

It would really be a little difficult; my rough-and-tumble life was the best possible training for such desperate adventures, so that Nephesch could not enter a protest. As to Neschamah, we nearly all of us (Thank God!) have a secret

sympathy, with the nobler type of criminal, whence the universal appeal of Arsène Lupin, Black Star, Raffles and Stingaree. When they can make some show of justice-on-their-side, it is easier still: Scarlet Pimpernel and his tribe. We are now almost within the marches of those heroes of romance that enchanted our adolescence: Hereward the Wake, Robin Hood, Bonnie Prince Charlie. And there are, on the other hand, few of us who do not secretly gloat over the discomfiture of "Money- Bags."

My retort, however, is convincing and final. Robbery in any shape is a breach of the Law of Thelema. It is interference with the right of another to dispose of his property as he will; and if I did so myself, no matter with what tactical justification, I could hardly ask others to respect my own similar right.

(The basis of our criminal law is simple, by virtue of Thelema: to violate the right of another is to forfeit one's claim to protection in the matter involved.)

So much for my own position; but let us look at the original case with another protagonist: let us say a young Thelemite, fanatically enthusiastic and not very far advanced in the Path of Initiation. Suppose he argues: "To hell with my integrity, to hell with my spiritual development: I don't give a hoot what happens to me: all I know is that I can help the Order, and I'm jolly well going to do it."

Who is going to balance that entry in his Karmic account? Might not even his willingness to give up his prospects of advance justify his title to go forward? The curious, complex, obscure and formidable path that he has chosen may quite conceivably be his best short cut to the City of the Pyramids!

I have known strange, striking cases of similar "vows to end vows." But not by any means such macabre fabrications as those of the ghouls at Colonel Olcott's death-bed, or the patient web of falsehood spun by the astrological-Toshophical spider about the dying dupe on whom he had fastened, Leo—I've forgotten the insect's name. Well, who hasn't? No, I haven't: Alan Leo he called himself.

I need hardly say that these cases may be multiplied indefinitely; nothing is easier, and few games more amusing, than to devise dilemmas calculated to stump the Master, or to catch him bending.

In fact, the "Schoolmen" wasted several centuries on this agreeable pastime; and they enjoyed the additional pleasure of torturing and burning anybody who happened not to be quite up-to-date with his views on *Utrum Virgo Maria in congressu cum Spiritu Sancto semen emiserit*, or some equally critical tickler.

Don't tease your pretty little head about it! Now you know the principles upon which one must make one's decisions, you will not go very far wrong.

But—one has to take all these things into consideration.

Then—you ask—am I saying that the End does *not* justify the means?

Hardly that.

What I really mean is that these two terms are unconnected. One decides about the "End" in one way: about the "Means" in another. But every proposition in your sorites has got to justify itself; and, having done so, to estimate its exact weight in relation to all the other terms of your problem.

"Confusion worse confounded?" I dare say it is; it's the best I can do with such a difficult question.

But I am perfectly happy about it; the one important thing (as Descartes —and Francis Bacon—saw) is that you should acquire and assimilate the METHOD of Thelemic thinking.

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

1: Note that in this paragraph Crowley settles an often asked question about allocation of Tarot and Hebrew Letters on the Tree of Life in his modified system. The letters stay in their traditional positions, and the Tarot Atu's of "Star" and "Emperor" switch places. Crowley identifies the influence of the HGA with the path of Gimel, and this is more remarkable in some ways than the Tarot attribution. If the K & C of the HGA comes from Neschamah, it would be expected to flow by the path of "The Lovers." Perhaps there is a distinction between unconscious influence and conscious Knowledge and Conversation. Crowley never completely resolved some questions related to Aiwass and some related to the objective existence of the HGA. Speculation on these matters is not closed, and this might be a good issue for resumption of the discussion – WEH.

2: This from the son of a Brewer! – WEH.

Chapter 50

A.C. and the "Masters"; Why they Chose him, etc.

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

"Details about *Book 4*?" This question lacks precision. I must pull a trigger at a venture.

The idea of 4 was due to my observation of St. Peter's in Rome; it is built with an eye unwavering from the number, as you will see when next you go there, aware of the fact. Also, 4 means, on the political plane, Temporal Power. (The Qabalistic Architect of St. Peter's knew that, and designed his talisman *ad hoc*.) This book was then, according to Ab-Ul-Diz,[1] to achieve worldly success. It is my fault if it did not; still, these are early days to judge of that.

Soror Virakam**1** insisted that I should write this in such language that the charwoman and the chimney-sweeper could understand it easily. She pulled me up at the first hint of obscurity.

This went well enough for Part I: Yoga. (And, indeed, that part did sell rather well.) But when I had finished Part II, I discovered that not only was the book an exceptionally recondite treatise on obscure technical points, but was not even an exposition of Magick at all! *Magick without Tears*, indeed!

This was my crazed humility; I honestly thought that everyone knew all about Magick, and how it was done, and why, and so on. There was little to do but to erect a superstructure of symbolism. This, by the way, has hampered me all my life, in every way; I am so aware of my own shameful ignorance on every subject—there is *no* mistake about this!—that I cannot conceive of any human being who is actually more ignorant than myself. How could such an one endure to live, with the consciousness of his infamy gnawing his liver?

I know this sounds mad; but it's true. Well, then, I set myself to repair the omission with Part III; this should be a really complete treatise on the Art and Science of magick, and it should be worked out from the beginning, a logical sequence like Euclid. Hence Axiom, Postulate and Theorems. I supposed even then that I could cover the field with another volume comparable in size with the former two.

I did indeed "finish" this, even announced publication; it was just going to Press when War (also announced five years before by Bartzabel, the Spirit of Mars) came along in 1914. I toted the rod around the world with me (excuse my American!) and in a fatal hour of weakness, self-mistrust, took to shewing it to some of my students. Of course—I might have known—they all with one accord began: "Oh, but you haven't said anything about—" —all the subjects in the world. So I started to fill in the gaps. As I did so, I found any amount more to do on my own. It went on like that for 14 years! Since it came out the voices of detraction have been dumb. I really do believe that I've covered the ground at last. Of course, time shewed that Part I, although it did really give the essentials of Yoga in the simplest possible language, was hardly more than an outline. More, it did not correlate Yoga with general philosophy. *Eight Lectures* have, I believe, remedied this.

As to Part IV, *The Book of the Law* section, the idea was that the volume should comply with the instructions given in AL III,39: "All this and a book to say how thou didst come hither and a reproduction of this ink and paper for ever—for in it is the word secret & not only in the English—and thy comment upon this the Book of the Law shall be printed beautifully in red ink and black upon beautiful paper made by hand; and to each man and woman that thou meetest, were it but to dine or to drink at them, it is the Law to give. Then they shall chance to abide in this bliss or no; it is no odds. Do this quickly!" I mistook "Comment" for "Commentary"—a word-by-word exposition of every verse (and much of it I loathed with all my heart!) including the Qabalistic interpretation, a task obviously endless.

What then about AL III, 40? (also see attached) This problem was solved only by achieving the task. In Paris,[2)] in a mood of blank despair about it all, out came the Comment. Easy, yes; inspired, yes; it is, as printed, the exact wording required. No further cavilling and quibbling, and controversy and casuistry. All heresiarchs are smelt in advance for the rats they are; they are seen brewing (their

very vile small beer) in the air (the realm of Intellect—Swords) and they are accordingly nipped in the bud. All Parliamentary requirements thus fulfilled according to the famous formula of the Irish M.P., we can get on to your other questions untroubled by doubt.

One Textus Receptus, photographically guaranteed. One High Court of Interpretation, each for himself alone. No Patristic logomachies! No disputed readings! No civil wars and persecutions. Anyone who wants to say anything, off with his head, and On with the Dance; let Joy be unconfined, You at the prow and Therion at the helm! Off we go.

"The Masters contacted you." Can you by any chance mean "The Masters made contact with you?" Assuming that such is the deplorable case, we may proceed.

Firstly, the effort on my part was precisely nil, I resented Their interference with proud bitter angry disbelief. The *Equinox of the Gods* describes this in detail.

But of course Their victim did not have a fair chance of escape. After all, They had had 2000 years to perfect Their plans. As for me, I had a traitor in the heart of the citadel; my Karma for God knows how many Incarnations. (The acquisition of the Magical Memory, fragmentary as that is, has thrown a great deal of light on that matter. Your letter does in fact surmise that this is so.)

You must understand that the arrival of a New Aeon knocks all the Rules sideways. I imagine that even the very strict Magical Code of Ethics looks like a cocked hat before They have done with it!

My theory is that They chose me for (*a*) my literary skill, knowledge and judgment; (*b*) my scientific training; (*c*) my familiarity with Eastern ways, habits of thought, and sympathetic predisposition; (*d*) my stern adherence to Truth; (*e*) my moral courage; (*f*) my dour persistence; and (*g*) my Karma as aforesaid.

They prepared me by (*a*) pushing me rapidly forward both in Magick and in Yoga; (*b*) wearying me of both of them and making me despair of them both as a solution to the problem of Life, and (*c*) fixing me both in Buddhistic pessimism and scientific rationalism, so that their victory over me might be as difficult and solid as achievement as possible. (I am by no means proud of myself. Either I fought them or failed them, at every turn.) Chapter V of *The Equinox of the Gods* might have been written with more emphasis; but there are passages elsewhere in that volume which lay great stress upon the point.

Yet, after all, AL II, 10-11 should surely be enough. "O prophet! thou hast ill will to learn this writing. I see thee hate the hand & the pen; but I am stronger."

To interrupt the dictation of a supremely important document, merely to jeer at the impotent resentment of the luckless scribe! It seemed to me downright ungenerous, the spirit of the triumphant schoolboy bully!

But Their ways are not as our ways; this question leads us on quite naturally to your next point, and the resolution of that know will unravel that querulous criticism. Just as a learned Divine might chuckle over a smoking-room story, or a heart overflowing with the honey of human kindness wish to have the housemaid "seven years a-killing," so may the greatest of the Masters—even discarnate!—have a perverted sense of humour, or a gross error in taste, (see AL I, 51) "…sweet wines and wines that foam!…"—wines, bar Chateau Yquem and very full-bodied port, that I dislike and despise—or any other eccentricity. Look at H.P.B.—hot stuff, if you like!

It is most necessary that you should understand what happens when on goes from Adeptus Exemptus $7^\circ = 4^\square$ to Magister Templi $8^\circ = 3^\square$. As you see from a glance at the Tree of Life, this advance entails the Crossing of the Abyss; and *there is no Path*. That means that one must *jump*. You must get rid of "all that you have, and all that you are"—that is one way to put it.

The Vision and the Voice, Aethyrs XVI—end, gives an immense amount of detail; it must be studied intensely, with diligence, with Will, and with imagination. Not only the attainment of the grade, but the events which go with, or come after, it; all these are described as actual Experience. Even so, it is all extraordinarily difficult until you have been through it yourself.

But that part which answers your question is not really very hard to grasp; it is indeed most obvious. Ask yourself: then what happens to he discarded elements of the Adept? They cannot be left as they are, to disintegrate, or to become vehicles for obsession. This entity which was the Exempt Adept has been built up in years of unremitting toil, as worthy Workshop wherein the Great Work should be accomplished. It has moreover been sanctified and glorified by the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel.

So as each Master has his own appointed Work to perform in the world, he is cast down into the Sephira, suitable for that work. If his function is to be that of a warrior, he would find himself in Geburah; if that of a great poet or composer, in

Tiphareth; and so on. He, the Master, inhabits this dwelling; but, having already got rid of it, he is able to allow it to carry on according to its nature without interference from the false Self (its head in Daäth) which hitherto had hampered it. ("If I were a dog, I should bark; if I were an owl, I should hoot," says Basil King Lamus in *The Diary of a Drug-Fiend*.) He is totally indifferent to the Event; so then he acts and reacts with perfect elasticity. This is the Way of the Tao; and that is why you cannot grasp the very idea of that Way—much less follow it!—unless you are a Master of the Temple.

Remember in any case, that not only the Adept, but anyone with the smallest capacity for Adeptship, is fundamentally an Artist; he will certainly not possess any of those bourgeois "virtues" which are just so many reactions to Blue Funk.

Of course, practically all of us in the West get our *first* knowledge from the pious and pretentious drivel of most writers in general circulation. So we start with prejudice.

Also, asceticism is all right when it is the proper means of attaining some special end. It is when it produces eructations of spiritual pride, and satisfied vanity, that it is poisonous. The Greek word means an athlete; and the training of an athlete is not mortification of the body. Nor is there any rule which covers all circumstances. When men go "stale" a few days before the race, they are "taken off training," and fed with champagne. But that is *part* of the training. Observe, too, that all men go "stale" sooner or later; training is abnormal, and must be stopped as soon as its object is attained. Even so, it too often strains vital organs, especially the heart and lungs, so that few rowing "Blues" live to be 50. But worst of all is the effect on the temper!

When it is permanent, and mistaken for a "Virtue," it poisons the very soil of the soul. The vilest weeds spring up; cruelty, narrowmindedness, arrogance—everything mean and horrible flowers in those who "Mortify the flesh." Incidentally, such ideas spawn the "Black Brother." The complete lack of humour, the egomaniac conceit, self-satisfaction, absence of all sympathy for others, the craving to pass their miseries on to more sensible people by persecuting them: these traits are symptomatic.

Well, this is a very brief synopsis, but I hope that it will answer your question at least so far as to enable you to understand more easily the account of these matters given in *The Vision and the Voice*.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

P.S. On reading this over, it has struck me that you may have meant to raise a totally different issue; that of "abstract morality." Rather an extensive battlefield; I will dispose my forces in array in my next letter of "morality, heavenly link."**3**

1: Mary Desti Sturges.

2: See also "The Abuldiz Working" in *Equinox* IV (1).

3: I am not totally clear which this is, but letters LXX and LXXI are titled "Morality" – T.S.

1) The Master (or Intelligence) who directed the writing of this Book; see Letter.2

2) Error: It was actually in Tunis, November 1925. Editor.

Chapter 51

How to Recognise Masters, Angels, etc., and how they Work

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

I have been thinking over what I wrote in my last letter with regard to the verification of appearances in the Astral Plane.**1**

I did not mention a parallel question of even greater immediate practical importance: that of one's relations with Astral or discarnate intelligences or with Those whom we call “The Masters” or “The Gods”: the messages of gestures which reach us through the normal physical channels. The importance is that they actually determine one's line of conduct in critical situations.

It seemed therefore a good idea to give you three examples from *The Spirit of Solitude*:**2** and here they are!

The first extract refers to the “miraculous” discovery of the MS of Liber AL some years after I had deliberately “lost” it.

The second, to the finding of a villa suited to the Work.

The third to my rescue from a state of despair.

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

[The following is from Vol. 4 of *The Confessions*, pp. 369 - 371.**3]**

It was part of my plan for the Equinox to prepare a final edition of the work of Dr. Dee and Sir Edward Kelly. I had a good many of the data and promised myself to complete them by studying the manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford—which, incidentally, I did in the autumn; but it struck me that it would be useful to get my large paintings of the four Elemental Watch Towers which I had made in Mexico. I thought these were probably in Boleskine. I decided to go up there for a fortnight or so. Incidentally, I had the conveniences for conferring upon Neuberg the degree of Neophyte, he having passed brilliantly through this year as a Probationer.

I consequently asked him and an Emmanuel man named Kenneth Ward, to come and stay with me. I had met Ward at Wastdale Head shortly before, having gone there to renew my ancient loves with the creeds of the gullies. It happened that Ward was very keen on skiing. I had several pairs and offered to give him some. This casual circumstance proved an essential part of the chain by which I was ultimately dragged behind the chariot of the Secret Chiefs. At least I thought it was a chain. I did not realize that steel of such exquisite temper might be beaten into a sword fit for the hand of a free man.

To my annoyance, I could not find the Elemental Watch Towers anywhere in the house. I daresay I gave up looking rather easily. I had got into a state of disgusted indifference about such things. Rose might have destroyed them in a drunken fit, just as she might have pawned them if they had possessed any commercial value. I shrugged my shoulders accordingly, and gave up the search. The skis that I had promised Ward were not to be found any more than the Watch Towers. After putting Neuburg through his initiation,[1)] we prepared to go to London. I had let the house, and my tenant was coming in on the first of July. We had four days in which to amuse ourselves; and we let ourselves go for a thorough good time. Thus like a thunderbolt comes the incident of June 28, thus described in my diary:

Glory be to Nuit, Hadit, Ra-Hoor-Khuit in the Highest! A little before midday I was impelled mysteriously (though exhausted by playing fives, billiards, etc. till nearly six this morning) to make a final search for the Elemental Tablets. And lo! when I had at last abandoned the search, I cast mine eyes upon a hole in the loft where were ski, *etc*., and there, O Holy, Holy, Holy! were not only all that I sought, but the manuscript of *Liber Legis*.**4**

The ground was completely cut away from under my feet. I remained for two whole days meditating on the situation—in performing, in fact, a sort of supplementary Sammasati to that of 1905. Having the knack of it, I reached a very clear conclusion without too much difficulty. The essence of the situation was that the Secret Chiefs meant to hold me to my obligation. I understood that the disaster and misery of the last three years was due to my attempt to evade my duty. I surrendered unconditionally, as appears from the entry of July 1.

I once more solemnly renounced all that I have or am. On departing (at midnight from the topmost point of the hill which crowns my estate) instantly shone the moon, two days before her fullness, over the hills among the clouds.

This record is couched in very general terms, but it was intended to cover the practical point of my resuming the task laid upon me in Cairo exactly as I might be directed to do by my superiors.

Instantly my burden fell from my back. The long crucifixion of home life came to a crisis, immediately on my return to London. At the same time every other inhibition was automatically removed. For the first time since the spring of 1904 I felt myself free to do my Will. That, of course, was because I had at last understood what my Will was. My aspiration to be the means of emancipating humanity was perfectly fulfilled. I had merely to establish in the world the Law which had been given me to proclaim: "…thou hast no right but to do thy will." Had I bent my energies from the first to proclaiming the Law of Thelema I should doubtless have found no obstacle in my path. Those which naturally arise in the course of any work soever, would have been quietly removed by the Secret Chiefs. But I had chosen to fight against myself for five years, and "If Satan shall be divided against Satan, how shall his kingdom stand?" The more I strove, the more I encouraged an internal conflict, and stultified myself. I had been permitted to complete my initiation, for the reason that by doing so I was fitting myself for the fight; but all my other efforts had met with a derisory disaster. More, one does not wipe out a lustre of lunacy by a moment of sanity. I am suffering to this day from the effects of having wasted some of the best years of my life in the stupid and stubborn struggle to set up my conscious self against its silent sovereign, my true Soul. 'Had Zimri peace who slew his master?'

[The following is from Vol. 4 of *The Confessions,* pp. 590 - 598.**5]**

A boisterous party was in progress. The dancer's lifelong friend, whom I will call by the name she afterwards adopted, Soror Virakam,**6** was celebrating her birthday. This lady, a magnificent specimen of mingled Irish and Italian blood, possessed a most powerful personality and a terrific magnetism which instantly attracted my own. I forgot everything. I sat on the floor like a Chinese God, exchanging electricity with her.

After some weeks' preliminary skirmishing, we joined battle along the whole front; that is to say, I crossed to Paris, where she had a flat, and carried her off to Switzerland to spend the winter skating. Arrived at Interlaken, we found that Murren was not open, so we went on to St. Moritz, breaking the journey at Zurich. This town is so hideous and depressing that we felt that our only chance of living through the night was to get superbly drunk, which we did . . .

(Let me emphasize that this wild adventure had not the remotest connection with Magick. Virakam was utterly ignorant of the subject. She had hardly so much as a smattering of Christian Science. She had never attended a séance or played Planchette.)

… *Lassati sed non Satiati***7** by midnight, I expected to sleep; but was aroused by Virakam being apparently seized with a violent attack of hysteria, in which she poured forth a frantic torrent of senseless hallucination. I was irritated and tried to calm her. But she insisted that her experience was real; that she bore an important message to me from some invisible individual. Such nonsense increased my irritation. But—after about an hour of it—my jaw fell with astonishment. I became suddenly aware of a coherence in her ravings, and further that they were couched in my own language of symbols. My attention being thus awakened, I listened to what she was saying. A few minutes convinced me that she was actually in communication with some Intelligence who had a message for me.

Let me briefly explain the grounds for this belief. I have already set forth, in connection with the Cairo Working, some of the safeguards which I habitually employ. Virakam's vision contained elements perfectly familiar to me. This was clear proof that the man in her vision, whom she called Ab-ul-Diz, was acquainted with my system of hieroglyphics, literal and numerical, and also with some incidents in my Magical Career. Virakam herself certainly knew nothing of any of these. Ab-ul-Diz told us to call him a week later, when he would give further information. We arrived at St. Moritz and engaged a suite in the Palace Hotel.

My first surprise was to find that I had brought with me exactly those Magical Weapons which were suitable for the work proposed, and no others. But a yet more startling circumstance was to come. For the purpose of the Cairo Working, Ouarda**8** and I had bought two abbai; one, scarlet, for me; one, blue, for her. I had brought mine to St. Moritz; the other was of course in the possession of Ouarda. Imagine my amazement when Virakam produced from her trunk a blue abbai so like Ouarda's that the only difference were minute details of the gold embroidery! The suggestion was that the Secret Chiefs, having chosen Ouarda as their messenger, could not use any one else until she had become irrevocably disqualified by insanity. Not till now could her place be taken by another; and that Virakam should possess a duplicate of her Magical Robe seemed a strong argument that she had been consecrated by Them to take the place of her unhappy predecessor.

She was very unsatisfactory as a clairvoyant; she resented these precautions. She was a quick-tempered and impulsive woman, always eager to act with reckless enthusiasm. My cold scepticism no doubt prevented her from doing her best. Ab-ul-Diz himself constantly demanded that I should show "faith," and warned me that I was wrecking my chances by my attitude. I prevailed upon him, however, to give adequate proof of his existence, and his claim to speak with authority. The main purport of his message was to instruct me to write a book on my system of Mysticism and Magick, to be called *Book 4*, and told me that by means of this book, I should prevail against public neglect. I saw no objection to writing such a book; on quite rational grounds, it was a proper course of action. I therefore agreed to do so. But Ab-ul-Diz was determined to dictate the conditions in which the book should be written; and this was a difficult matter. He wanted us to travel to an appropriate place. On this point I was not wholly satisfied with the result of my cross-examination. I know now that I was much to blame throughout. I was not honest either with him, myself, or Virakam. I allowed material considerations to influence me, and I clung—oh triple fool!—to my sentimental obligations towards Laylah.**9**

We finally decided to do what he asked, though part of my objection was founded on his refusal to give us absolutely definite instruction. However, we crossed the Passes in a sleigh to Chiavenna, whence we took the train to Milan. In this city we had a final conversation with Ab-ul-Diz. I had exhausted his patience, as he mine, and he told us that he would not visit us any more. He gave us his final instructions. We were to go to Rome, though he refused to name the exact

spot. We were to take a villa and there write *Book 4*. I asked him how we might recognize the right Villa. I forget what answer he gave through her, but for the first time he flashed a message directly into my own consciousness. "You will recognize it beyond the possibility of doubt or error," he told me. With this a picture came into my mind of a hillside on which were a house and garden marked by two tall Persian Nuts.

The next day we went on to Rome. Owing to my own Ananias-like attempt to "keep back part of the price," my relations with Virakam had become strained. We reached Naples after two or three quarrelsome days in Rome and began house-hunting. I imagined that we should find dozens of suitable places to choose from, but we spent day after day scouring the city and suburbs in an automobile, without finding a single place to let that corresponded in the smallest degree with our ideas.

Virakam's brat—a most god-forsaken lout—was to join us for the Christmas holidays, and on the day he was due to arrive we motored out as a forlorn hope to Posilippo before meeting him at the station at 4 o'clock or thereabouts. But the previous night Virakam had a dream in which she saw the desired villa with absolute clearness. (I had been careful to say nothing to her about the Persian Nuts, so as to have a weapon against her in case she insisted that such and such a place was the one intended.)

After a fruitless search we turned our automobile towards Naples, along the crest of Posilippo. At one point there is a small side lane scarcely negotiable by motor, and indeed hardly perceptible, as it branches from the main road so as to form an acute-angled "Y" with the foot towards Naples. But Virakam sprang excitedly to her feet, and told the chauffeur to drive down it. I was astonished, she being hysterically anxious to meet the train, and our time being already almost too short. But she swore passionately that the villa was down that lane. The road became constantly rougher and narrower. After some time, it came out on the open slope; a low stone parapet of the left protecting it. Again she sprang to her feet. "There," she cried, pointing with her finger, "is the Villa I saw in my dream!" I looked. No villa was visible. I said so. She had to agree; yet stuck to her point that she saw it. I subsequently returned to that spot and found that a short section of wall, perhaps 15 feet of narrow edge of masonry, is just perceptible through a gap in the vegetation.

We drove on; we came to a tiny piazza, on one side of which was a church. "That is the square and the Church," she exclaimed, "that I saw in my dream!"

We drove on. The lane became narrower, rougher and steeper. Little more than 100 yards ahead it was completely "up," blocked with heaps of broken stone. The chauffeur protested that he would be able neither to turn the car nor to back it up to the square. Virakam, in a violent rage, insisted on proceeding. I shrugged my shoulders. I had got accustomed to these typhoons.

We drove on a few yards. Then the chauffeur made up him mind to revolt, and stopped the car. On the left was a wide open gate through which we could see a gang of workmen engaged in pretending to repair a ramshackle villa. Virakam called the foreman and asked in broken Italian if the place was to let. He told her no; it was under repair. With crazy confidence she dragged him within and forced him to show her over the house. I sat in resigned disgust, not deigning to follow. Then my eyes suddenly saw down the garden, two trees close together. I stooped. Their tops appeared. They were Persian Nuts! The stupid coincidence angered me, and yet some irresistible instinct compelled me to take out my note book and pencil and jot down the name written over the gate— Villa Caldarazzo. Idly I added up the letters.**10** Their sum struck me like a bullet in my brain. It was 418, the number of the Magical Formula of the Aeon, a numerical hieroglyph of the Great Work. Ab-ul-Diz had made no mistake. My recognition of the right place was not to depend on a mere matter of trees, which might be found almost anywhere. Recognition beyond all possibility of doubt was what he promised. He had been as good as his word.

I was entirely overwhelmed. I jumped out of the car and ran up to the house. I found Virakam in the main room. The instant I entered I understood that it was entirely suited for a temple. The walls were decorated with crude frescoes which somehow suggested the exact atmosphere proper to the Work. The very shape of the room seemed somehow significant. Further, it seemed as if it were filled with a peculiar emanation. This impression must not be dismissed as sheer fancy. Few men but are sufficiently sensitive to distinguish the spiritual aura of certain buildings. It is impossible not to feel reverence in certain cathedrals and temples. The most ordinary dwelling houses often possess an atmosphere of their own; some depress, some cheer; some disgust, others strike chill to the heart.

Virakam of course was entirely certain that this was the Villa for us. Against this was the positive statement of the people in charge that it was not to be let. We refused to accept this assertion. We took the name and address of the owner, dug him out, and found him willing to give us immediate possession at a small

rent. We went in on the following day, and settled down almost at once to consecrate the Temple and begin the book.

[The following is from *The Confessions*, Vol. 4, pp. 379 - 384.**11]**

I knew in myself from the first that the revelation in Cairo was the real thing. I have proved with infinite pains that this was the case; yet the proof has not strengthened my faith, and disproof would do nothing to shake it. I knew in myself that the Secret Chiefs had arranged that the manuscript of *The Book of the Law* should have been hidden under the Watch Towers and the Watch Towers under the ski; that they had driven me to make the key to my position the absence of the manuscript; that they had directed Kenneth Ward's actions for years that he might be the means of the discovery, and arranged every detail of the incident in such a way that I should understand it as I did.

Yes; this involves a theory of the powers of the Secret Chiefs so romantic and unreasonable that it seems hardly worth a smile of contempt. As it happens, an almost parallel phenomenon came to pass ten years later. I propose to quote it here in order to show that the most ordinary events, apparently disconnected, are in fact only intelligible by postulating some such people as the Secret Chiefs of the A∴A∴ in possession of some such prevision and power as I ascribe to them. When I returned to England at Christmas, 1919, all my plans had gone to pieces owing to the dishonesty and treachery of a gang which was bullying into insanity my publisher in Detroit. I was pledged in honour to look after a certain person; but I was practically penniless. I could not see any possible way of carrying on my work. (It will be related in due course how this condition of things came about, and why it was necessary for me to undergo it.)

I found myself at Morêt, on the edge of the Forest of Fontainebleau, with nothing to do but wait. I did not throw up the sponge in passionate despair as I had done once before to my shame—I had been rapped sufficiently hard on the knuckles to cure me of that—but I said to the Gods "Observe, I have done my damnedest, and here I am at a dead centre. I am not going on muddling through: I demand a definite sign from you that I am still your chosen prophet." I therefore note in my diary, on January 12, 1920, as follows:

I am inclined to make my Silence include all forms of personal work, and this is very hard to give up, if only because I am still afraid of 'failure,' which is absurd. I

ought evidently to be non-attached, even to avoiding the Woes-Attendant-Upon-Refusing-The-Curse-Of-My-Grade, if I may be pardoned the expression.

And why should I leave my efficacious Tortoise and look at people till my lower jaw hangs down? Shall I see what the *Yi* says? Ay. Question: Shall I abandon all magical work soever until the appearance of a manifest sign?

Answer:



No symbol could be more definite and unambiguous.

I have invoked Aiwass to manipulate the Sticks; and, wishing to ask "What shall be the Sign?" got instantly the reference in CCXX to our Lady Babalon: "the omnipresence of my body." But this is not quite clear; I took it mentally as referring to the expected arrival of Our Lady, but it might mean a trance, or almost anything. So I will ask *Yi*, as my last magical act for the time being.



I think this means the arrival of Our Lady. I have serious doubts whether the hexagram should not have been:



Which would have certainly meant that. That I should doubt anything is absurd: I shall know the Sign, without fail. And herewith I close the Record, and await that Sign.

The next entry is dated Sunday, February 1.

Kindly read over the entry of January 12 with care exceeding. Now then: On Friday, January 30, I went to Paris, to buy pencils, Mandarin, a palette, Napoleon Brandy, canvases and other appurtenances of the artist's dismal trade. I took

occasion to call upon an old mistress of mine, Jane Chéron, concerning who see *Equinox* Vol. I, "Three Poems." She has never had the slightest interest in occult matters, and she has never done any work in her life, even of the needlework order. I had seen her once before since my escape from America, and she said she had something to show me, but I took no particular notice, and she did not insist. My object in calling on this second occasion was multiple: I wanted to see the man with whom she is living, who has not yet returned from Russia; I wanted to make love to her; and wanted to smoke a few pipes of opium with her, she being a devotee of that great and terrible God.

Consider now: the Work whereby I am a Magus began in Cairo (1904) with the discovery of the Stælæ of Ankh-f-n-Khonsu, in which the principal object is the Body of our Lady Nuit. It is reproduced in colours in the *Equinox*, Vol. I, No. 7. Jane Chéron has a copy of this book. On Friday afternoon, then, I was in her apartment. I had attained none of my objectives in calling on her, and was about to depart. She detained me to show me this "something." She went and took a folded cloth from a drawer. "Shut your eyes," she said.

When I opened them they saw a cloth four feet or more in length, on which was a magnificent copy, mostly in applique silk, of the Stélé. She then told me that in February 1917, she and her young man had gone to the South of France to get cured of the opium habit. In such cases insomnia is frequent. One night, however, he had gone to sleep, and on waking in the morning found the she, wakeful, had drawn a copy of the Stélé on a great sheet of paper.

It is very remarkable that so large a sheet of paper should have been at hand; also that they should have taken that special book on such a journey; but still more that she should have chosen that picture, nay that she, who had never done anything of the sort before, should have done it at all. More yet, that she should have spent three months in making a permanent thing of it. Most of all, that she should have shown it to me at the very moment when I was awaiting an "unmistakable" sign.

For observe, how closely the Words of my Entry of January 12 describe the sign, "the omnipresence of my body." And there She was—in the last place in the world where one would have sought Her.

Note, too, the accuracy of the *Yi King* symbol





for is of course the Symbol of our Lady, and the God below Her in the



Stælæ is the Sun.

All this is clear proof of the unspeakable power and wisdom of Those who have sent me to proclaim the Law.

I observe, after a talk with M. Jules Courtier yesterday, that all their S.P.R.[2)] work is proof only of extra-human Forces. We knew about them all along; the universe is full of obscure and subtle manifestation of energy; we are constantly advancing in our knowledge and control of them. Telekinesis is of the same order of Nature as the Hertz Rays or the Radium emanations. But what nobody before me has done is to prove the existence of extra-human Intelligence, and my magical Record does this. I err in the interpretation, of course; but it is impossible to doubt that there is a Somebody there, a Somebody capable of combining events as a Napoleon forms his plans of campaign, and possessed of powers unthinkably vast.

If these events be indeed the result of calculation and control on the part of the Secret Chiefs, it seems at first sight as if the people involved had been prepared to play their parts from the beginning. Our previous relations, the girl's to opium, my friendship with her lover, and his interest in my work; omit any item and the whole plan fails. But this assumption is unnecessary. The actual preparation need not go back further than three years, when the Stælæ was embroidered. We may allow the Secret Chiefs considerable option, just as a chess player is not confined to one special combination for his attack. We may suppose that had these people not been available, the sign which I demanded might have been given me in some other equally striking way. We are not obliged to make extravagant assumptions in order to maintain that the evidence of purpose is irresistibly strong.

To dismiss this intricate concatenation of circumstances, culminating as they do in the showing forth of the exact sign which I had demanded, is simply to strain the theory of probabilities beyond the breaking point. Here then are two complicated

episodes which do to prove that I am walking, not by faith but by sight, in my relations with the Secret Chiefs; and these are but two links in a very long chain. This account of my career will describe many others equally striking. I might, perhaps, deny my inmost instinct the right to testify were any one case of this kind in question; but when, year after year, the same sort of thing keeps on happening, and, when, furthermore, I find myself able to predict, as experience has taught me to do in the last three years, that they will happen, and even how the pieces will fit into the puzzle, I am justified in assuming a causal connection.

1: The reference is probably to Chapter XVII – T.S.

2: This was the original title of Crowley's *Confessions* – T.S.

3: These page references are presumably to the then unpublished typescript of vol. 4 of *The Confessions of Aleister Crowley*. This section appears with no substantial omissions in chapter 65 of the Symonds and Grant abridgement (pp. 595-7) – T.S.

4: The original manuscript of Liber AL vel Legis was again lost, following the death of Sascha Germer, widow of Frater Saturnus. Ten years later it came home again, this time found in the basement of a non-O.T.O. member. The MS of The Book of the Law presently resides in a bank vault in the USA, under control of Ordo Templi Orientis—see The Magickal Link, July '84 e.v. – WEH.

5: Cap. 70 pp. 676-680 of Symonds and Grant edition –T.S.

6: Mary Desti Sturges.

7: *Lat.*, "exhausted but not satiated."

8: Rose Edith Crowley née Kelly, AC's first wife. "Ourada" is the Arabic for "rose" – T.S.

9: Leilah Waddell.

10: Hebrew numeration, reading the O as Ayin: (6 + 10 + 30 + 30 + 1) + (20 + 1 + 30 + 4 + 1 + 200 + 1 + 7 + 7 + 70) = 77 + 341 = 418) – T.S.

11: Cap. 65 pp. 598-601 in the Symonds and Grant edition – T.S.

1) The preparation for this was in some ways trying to the candidate. For instance, he had to sleep naked for seven nights on a litter of gorse.

2) Society for Psychical Research.

Chapter 52

Family: Public Enemy No. 1

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

In your last letter you mention "family pressure." Horrid word, family! Its very etymology accuses it of servility and stagnation.

Latin, *famulus*, a servant; Oscan, *Faamat*, he dwells.

It almost deserves the treatment it gets in that disreputable near-Limerick:

Three was a young lady named Emily
Who was not understood by her femily,
She acted so rummily,
The head of the fummily,
Had her matched with a greyhound from Wem-b-iley.

They feared she would breed a facsimile—
Bring utter disgrace on the fimilly,
So the head of the fommily,
Read her a homily—
And the devil flew out of the Chim-b-illy!

A word ought to have more respect for itself!

Then, think what horrid images it evokes from the mind. Not only Victorian; wherever the family has been strong, it has always been an engine of tyranny. Weak members or weak neighbours: it is the mob spirit crushing genius, or overwhelming opposition by brute arithmetic. Of course, one must be of good family to do anything much that is worth doing; but what is one to say when the question of the Great Work is posed?

Bless you, the whole strength of the family is based on the fact that it cares for the family only: therefore its magical formula thus concentrated is of necessity hostile to so exclusively individual an aim as Initiation.

Its sentiments are reciprocated.

In every Magical, or similar system, it is invariably the first condition which the Aspirant must fulfill: he must once and for all and for ever put his family outside his magical circle.

Even the Gospels insist clearly and weightily on this.

Christ himself (i.e. whoever is meant by this name in this passage) callously disowns his mother and his brethren (Luke VIII, 19). And he repeatedly makes discipleship contingent on the total renunciation of all family ties. He would not even allow a man to attend his father's funeral!

Is the magical tradition less rigid?

Not on your life!

The one serious grimoire of the Middle Ages is *The Book of the Sacred Magic of Abramelin the Mage*. He makes no bone about it. He even condescends to point out the family as the most serious of all the obstacles to the performance of the Operation, and he gives the correct psychological reasons why this should be so. You said it yourself! "Family pressure" was your pungent and pertinent expression. Just so.

I think that "family" should include any body of persons with common interests which they expect or wish you to share. One's old school or university, the regiment, the golf club, the business, the party, the country: any of these may dislike very much your absorption in affairs alien to their own. But the family is the classic type, because its pull is so potent and persistent. It began when you gave your first yell; your personality is deliberately wrenched and distorted to the family code; and their zoology is so inadequate that they always feel sure that their Ugly Duckling is a Black Sheep. Even for their Fool they find a use: he can be invaluable in the Church of in the Army, where docile incompetence is the sure key to advancement.

Curse them! They are always in the way.

Even centuries after one of them is dead, he exercises his abominable craft; and you are only the less able to ward off the slaps of the Dead Hand, because (after all!) there is a whole lot of him in you. He appears at times as a sort of alien conscience; and, indebted as you may be to him for your physical constitution—I give him credit for not having saddled you with gout, rheumatism, T.B., or other

plague—and many of your most useful virtues, you want to handle your assets yourself, without a subterranean current of criticism, or even active interference through others in your sole preoccupation in the Great Work.

I have not actually detected any ancestor of mine stealing my whiskey, as the advertisement warns us may happen: but—oh well! However you like to look at it, he is always an influence upon you; and that, good or bad, you quite rightly resent.

In the Brahmin caste, the aspirant to Yoga makes it a rule to fulfill his duties to the family and the State; once those jobs are definitely done, he cuts the painter, and becomes Sannyasi. Many a Maharajah, many a Wazir, to say nothing of less responsible people, plan their lives from their earliest days of wearing the sacred Cord as Brahmacharyi, with these ambitions carefully mapped out; and when the right moment comes for him to disappear into the jungle—the rest is Silence.

A sound scheme: that is, provided that one has full confidence in the General Theory. But we Caucasians happen not to believe in the *Vedas*, at least not in the dyed-in-the-wool sense which comes natural to the budding Brahmin; as to "our own"—why our own?—scriptures, no intelligent person takes them seriously any more. Some folk whittle away merrily, and fashion a Saviour in their own images; others strain the text and concoct a symbolic interpretation which is more or less satisfying—as can be done with any bunch of legends. But such devices leave us without Accepted Authority, and without that nobody is going to gamble away his life. Thus the Path for men of spiritual integrity begins with absolute scepticism. Our methods must be exclusively inductive.

"Gamble away his life," did I say? Indeed I did. If there is any truth at all in anything, or even any meaning in life, in Nature herself; then there is one thing, one thing only paramount: to find out who one is, what is one's necessary Way.

The alternative to the Great Work is the hotchpot of dispersion, of fatuity, or disconnected nonsense.

To the performance of this Work the nearest obstacle and the most obvious is the Family. Its presumption is manifest, in that it expects everybody to yield it first priority.

In the Russian troubles following the October Revolution, General Denikin, who was trying to put Humpty-Dumpty back on the wall, captured the aged parents of Leon Trotsky, in command of the enemy, and chivalrously telegraphed him to

withdraw his troops to certain positions, otherwise the old people would be shot. Trotsky replied "Shoot!"

The point of this story is that I hope it will answer your next question: You are so very clear and firm about the family; then why don't you insist on all your pupils starting with a domestic holocaust?

Why? Because a lot of my early rock climbing was done on Beachy Head. Ask me something harder!

Look you now, chalk has every possible element of danger from the standpoint of the cragsman. All the more glory to him who can master it!

It is an essential part of the Rosicrucian system that the Adept should "wear the costume of the country in which he is travelling." I take this in the widest sense. By that word "country" I understand this planet and this social status "to which it has pleased God to call me." The Brethren of the Rose and Cross depreciated monastic life or hermit life: perhaps they thought such expedients cowardly, or at least as a confes- sion of weakness.

I agree. One ought to be able to live the normal life of a member of one's class, to all external seeming; at least sufficiently so as not to appear unduly eccentric.

Perhaps "Let my servants be few & secret: …" bears some such implication.

But the condition of allowing such apparent laxity is this: That one should be as swift and terse as Trotsky in any similar situation.

If one's family were reasonable human beings, (But they never are, she sighed) one could perhaps do wiseliest by explaining the situation. "This Work of mine—you don't understand it, no need that you should—is the only important part of my life. I mean to be scrupulously careful of your feelings, and I see no reason why my chosen career should damage our relations. There is only one thing to remember: IF I ever get the faintest suspicion that you are opposing me, or condemning my plans, or interfering in any way, even with the best intentions, THEN—with a single blow I sever our relations, and for ever." "Well, that's really very nice of you, Holy One," you might say; "but you are not the only one to be considered, what about the Masters? Do they ride us on the snaffle? Tradition says not so."

This depends wholly on you. If you are a quite ordinary Aspirant, and a few dozen incarnations one way or the other don't make such a difference, then They

presumably won't bother about you at all. In the course of centuries, Karma will roll out the creases.

But—suppose you are of those specially chosen to execute some necessary operation in the course of Their plans? Quite another pair of boots to tread *that* Path. Don't imagine that you are not on it yet, either, just because you happen to be in a mood of humility. A pawn may be more powerful than a Rook, in some positions.

However, even if you are not on it, you can start to-day. That is one of the matters that depends exclusively on you.

If you have already taken the appropriate and adequate Oath, well and good; if not, take it now!

What Oath?

To cross the Abyss, you have to give up "all that you have and all that you are." This Oath is unconditional: see *The Vision and the Voice* for details.

But for the present so much is neither desirable nor possible: in fact, you cannot genuinely realize what it means.

So you may content yourself with a simple, reasonable and intelligible Oath for the present: to devote "all that you have and all that you are" to the service of the Order.

The advantage of so doing is that the Grand Auditor of the City of the Pyramids takes immediate notice. He brings your account (Karma) up to date, and starts you off with a Cash Ledger. That is, he arranges for your errors to be paid for on the spot, instead of the customary credit system that goes on for centuries. The advantage of *this* is that you know what you are being punished for, and learn your lesson at once.

This process is, naturally, very painful at times; for one thing, you can't dope yourself with illusions about your being a grand-souled, great-hearted, misunderstood saint, martyr, and hero.

And—this I tell you from most bitter experience—the agony is sometimes all but unendurable. The Masters (or the Lords of Karma, or whatever you like: I have to put all this in a silly romantic language, if I am to get the meaning across at all) see the position with absolute accuracy; They know at once how so-and-so, which you

made rather a point of offering, is really that which you feel you can bear to surrender. Believe me, it is a very thorough winnowing, "with which he shall thoroughly purge his floor," when Vannus Iacchi whirs in the mill.

My personal attitude to all this is, it may be, unduly positive. I may be a bit of a fanatic. But I'm inclined to think that you will feel the same, because of your detestation of the "elusive." Having decided to gamble, there is no sense in fumbling with the dice. Anything that makes for closer contact, prompter action, clearer vision, is to be welcome.

The deliberate swearing of such Oaths, and the passionate adherence to them, is the surest method of approach to the Masters. You force the gate of Their temple; if not actually one of Them, you are at least in Their class.

Only one reminder: it is worse than useless to take these Oaths with any such ambition. One of the most precious privileges thus gained is the clean sweep that is made of all pretence.

This too is painful beyond words at first. Until the process starts, you have not the faintest idea of how you have wrapped yourself in layers of lies.

(The Baltis are like this, you know; they wrap the baby when it is born, and add rag after rag, never removing any, until a prosperous citizen at 40 is more like a bale of cloth than a human being!) May I add that you are going to be shocked? Ideas of the most atrocious and abominable nastiness, things literally unthinkable by your normal conscious apparatus, are discovered as the mainsprings of your character!

Those in attendance at confinements are always at first amazed and horrified by the remarks of the most virtuous and refined ladies; but that is the mere loosening of a few superficial layers, such as are accessible to anaesthetics. These revelations amount to not 1/10 of 1% of the grisly horrors that are revealed by Sammasati.

Now go ahead!

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

Chapter 53

“Mother-Love”

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

You enthusiastically remark that the love of the mother for the off-spring is something that no man can understand: and you appear to prize it!

Well, some men have had a jolly good shot at it, notably Emile Zola. The Usher goes into the corridor, and calls that name in strident and stentorian tones. In he waddles, the squat obese bespectacled studious Jew, with the most devastating of all his thunderbolts under his arm—*La Terre*, and so what?

“How he will prologize, how he will perorate” about:

“The dewy musk-rose, mid-May's eldest child,
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves!”

He will not.

La Terre to him is indeed the mother of all men, sole source of our essential nourishment, the earth to which we are all bound in chains by our inexorable bodies, our ineluctable need of life—and death.

Sublime the thesis? What does he make of it? Theme No. 1 in the first chapter: rural love. How exquisite, how delicate, first flush of dawn upon the glowing meadows! The young man who is courting is not idle, either; he serves great nature in yet other ways. He is taking a prize cow to be “served:” on him depend our milk, cheese, butter, veal and beef. He also contributes to our Wienerschnitzel Holstein, or Filet de Boeuf à la Robespierre, our Sole au Gratin and our oeufs à la Neige.

So then, our rustic idyll! “Rocked on the bosom of our Mother Nature.” Longus paints Daphnis and Chloe, Whowasit draws “Aucassin and Nicolette”—why, it's a root of literature itself all the way to Austin Dobson, Norman Gale and Thomas Hardy, Theocritus—er—hum—not so much of “Mother-love” Trinacria way!

Where Zola failed, who can hope to succeed? To distinguish between brute and brute: no, dear lady, that task I not regretfully relinquish!

But in "refined" strata? That cock won't fight, O thou Aspirant to the Sacred Wisdom! It's very often worse; for under the anaesthetic, the most delicately-minded ladies of high social position and religious repute are apt to pour forth floods of filth which would disgust the coarsest harridans of slum-land!

This is the final fact: so long as our life is bound to that of the animal and vegetable worlds, so that we are bondslaves born to their quite ineradicable habits, so long are we dragged back from every flight of fancy or imagination such as would break the chains that anchor us to mud.

The most far-seeing of our prophetically minded writers, Aldous Huxley, brands this black fact upon our foreheads.

The first condition of a "Brave New World" must be the dissociation of sexual from reproductive life.1 The word "mother" must be as nauseating to all properly human minds as it now is to every one that has contemplated the subject with clear vision.

I know there is an answer to all this; in fact, The Book of the Law enables us to take it in our stride.

But there is another aspect of "mother-love" which is urgent, practical, and in no way dependent upon ideal considerations.

What do we find in practice as the immediate consequence of this "sublime," this "holy" instinct?

Quite a few species of animals habitually devour their offspring; but women "know a trick worth two of that."

No, no, let Zola rhapsodize!

Time passes. Libitina smiles. But the conditions are not spacious; both the "happy events"—real ladies and gentlemen emphasize this euphemism with a snigger and a smirk—are expected the same night, and the only place available is the barn.

Now Zola, well into his stride, gives us full details, hopping from one corner of the barn to the other, so accurately and so judicially that the reader very soon "loses his place," and doesn't know which birth is being described in any given paragraph.

The accumulated hogwash of a billion sentimentalists dashes in vain against that cliff of ugly truth.

Next witness: Dr. Doughty, who looked after the health of Trinity College, Cambridge.

A swift routine examination: then he tilted his chair backwards, thrust his hands deep into his trousers pockets, fixed the patient with a glare of ice; then these words dropped like vitriol from his lips: "You—young—fool! You go and put the most tender part of your body where I wouldn't put my umbrella!"

It is the magical formula of a man to push outwards, of a woman to close upon from without.

This is commonly seen as the possessive instinct: it may often be masked as "protective" but its essential truth is the impulse to devour. Hence the death-like idea of "home," where she can digest her victims in security and at leisure.

Hence, as even Jung saw in his very first book, and wrote in stated terms, the first task of manhood—of the "hero"—is to escape from the mother. Now the son, with his male formula, his formula of life, his instinct to push out, to break down all that would restrain him, finds it perfectly natural to "bite the hand that fed him," as the complaint might piteously wail. But the daughter has no club to smash, no sword to cut; all she can hope to do is to pass the buck. The amoeba, born of fusion,**2** nourished by wrapping its pseudopods around such drifting particles as come within its scope, is but a parasite on its own dam until the fusion is complete.

So, when a woman is "*so* good," "*so* devoted to her daughter," God help the daughter!

She is never allowed to think for herself in the minutest matters; she is bound hand and foot remorselessly to the routine of her "decent Christian home;" a wageless kitchen-slut. No hope of escape unless the mother's vampirism takes the form of selling her off to the highest bidder.

Need it be added that the "good mother" is usually quite unaware of all this, will read these simple statements of plain fact in speechless rage?

But the truth stands: the woman-formula is Death: "return to the Great Mother" is the catastrophe of the hero, whether he be Coriolanus or Peer Gynt.

It is surely unnecessary to state the rider to this theorem; so perhaps I had better:

Anyone who has not totally and for ever destroyed in himself every vestige of this instinct, extirpating every root and charring it with Fire, cannot take the first step on the Path of the Wise.

How nobly opposite is the Man-Formula! Its freight the wealth of the whole Universe, that splendid Argosy leaps free upon the glittering Ocean, to cast the very Soul of Life upon uncharted and enchanted isles!

It is not to these few but well-chosen words that I propose to look to enhance my popularity in the Woman's Clubs of the United States.

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

P.S. "Mother-Love" is, of course, a branch of family affection about which I have already written to you in no uncertain terms. Of all its sub-sections this is the worst because it is the strongest, the most natural, that is to say, the most brutish. You have complained pathetically on more than one occasion that I do not seem to know my own mind about Nature; that I am always contradicting myself. Sometimes I tell you that everything is in Nature; that everything moves by Nature: that to oppose Nature is to provoke endothermic reaction, and then I leap headlong through the hoop of my own construction and want you to defy nature, to attack her, to overcome her. Really, dear Master, it is too bad of you!

I know it sounds bad but there is not really the opposition that on the surface there seems to be. Perhaps it is that we are talking about two kinds of Nature. In one sense it might be asserted that the final formula of Nature is Inertia; in other words, that the dyad of manifested existence is an arbitrary and artificial development of the Zero to which everything must always cancel out.

Now by saying that, we have to all intents and purposes, answered the question which it poses; all positive development must be a conflict with that Inertia. It is the opposition between the magical Path and the Mystical; we may therefore say fearlessly that all forms of progress, although they make use of the formulae of nature which have brought them to their present situation, are attempts to proceed further on the way of the True Will.

It is particularly important to understand this at the present time when the Aeon of Horus is just getting under way. For the Aeon of Isis, that of the Mother, appears

to have regarded the whole of Nature as a spontaneous growth of universal scope. In the Aeon Of Osiris, the restriction of Family appears for the first time.

The world of sentient beings is separated into clusters, each family, clan, gens, or nation, acting as a unit and standing upon armed neutrality with respect to similar groups. But in the Aeon of Horus this system has broken down. That such is the case is already abundantly manifest.

Totalitarianism in any of its forms tends to break down the family structure. It considers only the Individual, and him, merely as a unit in the welter of the state.

Experience will doubtless prove that this idea simply will not work. The Individual will come to his own, but it will be impossible to reconstruct the Family System.

It will in particular be impossible to maintain the intimate relation between Mother and Child, which has been so dominant a feature of past civilizations.

The very social and economic causes which in the old time tended to cement the relationship, have become centrifugal in their effect.

1: It is by no means clear that Huxley saw the kind of society he described in Brave New World as particularly desirable; and it is odd that Crowley, given his scathing remarks on the subject of Utopias constructed on a priori grounds (vide chapter 79, "Progress" should seem to endorse such things. In the "New Comment" on AL I, 40 Crowley similarly quotes, apparently favourably (in connection with the "Three Grades") a proposal for a "Rational State" outlined by a character in an earlier Huxley novel, Crome Yellow (the scheme in question was in any case straight out of Plato's Republic); and yet in any such regulated society, "Irregularity, Eccentricity, Disorder, the Revolutionary Spirit, Experiment" are precisely those qualities which are stamped on, and hard – T.S.

2: sic, s.b. "fission" – T.S.

Chapter 54

"On Meanness"

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Yes, indeed! As you surmise, the injunction to "buy the egg of a perfectly black hen without haggling" is another way of putting the Parable of the Pearl of Great Price; a much better way. For the Pearl-buyer did think of equating the values, which is precisely what one must not do. That Egg is *incommensurable* with money.

(Further, the saying teaches one to insist on perfection; the hen must not have one tinge of aught but black in any feather.)

However, that is neither here not there; what you want me to do is to discuss Economy in its magical aspects.

Very good: to begin, Economy does not mean thrift or cheeseparing. It means: the law of the house. In practice, one may say "management." Finances are only one branch of the science, just as truckling, blackmail, graft, treachery and double-dealing are only components of modern statesmanship.

All the same, I propose to talk in terms of money, because everyone has thought a good deal about it. Examples are abundant, ideas easy to express, and one can be concise and clear without danger of misunderstanding.

So let us call this letter Moralizing on Meanness!

Firstly (dearly beloved brethern) meanness is flat contradiction to the Teaching of *The Book of the Law*. For "The word of Sin is Restriction…." and meanness is plainly a most flagrant case of Restriction. Also, there is nearly always an element of Fear in meanness; at least, I would like to bet that 95% of mean people originally became so because they foresaw a friendless and penniless old age. And fear is particularly forbidden in the Book: II, 16 "…fear not to undergo the curses…." Waxing in wrath, III, 17 goes on: "…Fear not at all; fear neither men

nor Fates, nor gods, nor anything. Money fear not, nor laughter of the folk folly, nor any other power in heaven or upon the earth or under the earth…." Then pretty well all the positive injunctions imply reckless enthusiasm. "Beauty and strength, leaping laughter and delicious languor, force and fire, are of us." (AL II,20)

What's more, meanness does not even pay! I propose to tell you why this is, and how things work out.

What *is* money? A medium of exchange devised to facilitate the transaction of business. Oil in the engine. Very good, then; if instead of letting it flow as freely and smoothly as possible, you baulk its very nature; you prevent it from doing its True Will. So every restriction (that word again!) on the exchange of wealth is a direct violation of the Law of Thelema.

How stupid is this tightening of the purse-strings! Parable No. Three, "The fairy Bank Note."

One evening a man walked into an inn and asked for hospitality. In the morning, when his bill came, he found he had nothing but a £100 note. "I'm afraid I've no change till the Banks open." "Oh, stick to it— I'll be back next week—I've enough petrol to take me home."

"Handy," though Boniface, "that will just square my brewer." That reminded the brewer to pay his cornchandler, who had been worrying him to settle. He wasn't nasty about it; he really needed the money for his farmer, a worthy man who wanted to build some new outhouses, and the builder couldn't give any credit because he was being pressed by the man who supplied his materials, a man in great trouble on account of his wife's long illness, and the necessity of an immediate and very expensive operation.

So the doctor went round, very lordly, to the local estate agent, and made the first payment on the new house he had wanted for so long. "Hullo! Hullo!" laughed the agent; "here we are again. It's curious, but I paid out that note only ten days ago!"

So there were seven hampered and worried men all made happy, and the Bank note was in the hands of its original holder.

Now then for True Story No. 1. It is my own experience. When, nearly 40 years ago, I walked through Spain, accompanied only by a single chela, there was little paper money in use, at least in the rather primitive places which we favoured. The currency was confined to the silver peso, and its fractions. About 90 miles north of

Madrid, we found, one fine morning, that our well-meant attempt to pay our bill at the posada threw a bombshell into the works: the people of the Inn jabbered and gesticulated among themselves for about half an hour before they produced our receipt, and bade us Hasta la vista!

Next day, the same thing, rather worse. The day after, worse still; and we saw that they were disputing about the coins that we had handed over. Finally, about 20 miles from Madrid, they wouldn't take our money at all! Instead, the pointed out that we were English gentlemen, and they would be eternally honoured and grateful if we would send the money from Madrid!

On arrival at that city, we noticed long queues of people besieging the Banks; I put my finger to my nose, and said Aha!

But, sitting down at a café, oh no! not at all! Pesos were passing without question. Well, well! So I got into conversation with a knowledgeable-looking bloke, and he told me the whole story. It seemed that the Director of Customs had a brother in Mexico D.F. who manufactured brass bedsteads. The uprights of these were packed with forged pesos of Fernando VII and one other king—I forget his name—made of the same standard silver alloy as the genuine coins, and so well executed that the only way to tell the false was that they looked newer than they should have been, in view of the date! And so (continued my informant) there was a panic, and no one would take any money at all, and the city was dying on its feet! So the Government gave orders to the Banks to change any coins soever for their equivalent in freshly-minted money—that's what those queues are—and "every one is happy again." "But," I objected, "I see you have some old coins." He laughed. "Those one-eyed mules at the Banks! All foolishness! Days ago we all agreed to take any money without question—and as long as we all do that, why, nobody's hurt!"

I am not pretending that there is anything new about any of this; the whole theory of credit implies the probability of some such happenings.

(During the Skirmish [1914-1918 e.v.] some small town in Northern Mexico got cut off by warring presidential brigands from the rest of the country, and got on perfectly well for a year or more without any money or commerce at all, on a basis of good-neighbourly feeling. Similar principles at Cefal; three years without a single quarrel about money. We used to say: "There's no harm in money until you begin to count it!") Trouble comes from Fear, and from Restriction.

When I first landed in the U.S.A. (1900) I noticed instantly that practically everybody seemed to have money to burn, defying statistics. "Oh, that's simple!" explained a banker to whom I mentioned it; "in this country we reckon that money circulates 9 times as fast as in England. One dollar does the work of nine." Then, a year later at San Francisco, everything seemed very dear." Why? In S.F. one hardly ever saw a copper coin; the nickel (2 1/2d) was the smallest in practical use. Going on to Honolulu, it was twice as bad; and there the dime (5d) was the smallest coin one ever saw. Somehow, it made for stickiness. When one hesitates to pay money out, one cannot expect other people to feel otherwise. So everything becomes increasingly constipated. I am not denying the virtues of thrift, but it's a long and tedious business; and all the big fortunes are made by shrewd gambling. Even if your policy be "small profits," it is a failure unless it ensures "quick returns." This is the deeper meaning of the proverb "time is money."

Then, isn't there a little Bonus? Isn't it worth something to have a pleasant life, and to have people like you. It leaps to the eye if one is a "tightwad;" the Saturnian constriction shows itself in a myriad ways. "The liberal soul shall be made fat; and he that watereth shall be watered also himself."

Now, then expand your thought; from he consideration of money (which we chose merely for convenience of discussion) apply these principles to the spheres of all the other planets. You will very soon heighten the enjoyment of life beyond all measure and belief!

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

Chapter 55

Money

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

You ask me for the initiated view about the power of money. As the poet says: "O.k. oke; I'm yer bloke." F. Marion Crawford, a Victorian novelist, now (I think deservedly) obsolescent, thought I saw one of his books last week on the shelves of a tuppenny shark-library,[1] wrote a tale *Mr. Isaacs* based on the life of one Mr. Jacobs, the Indian Rothschild of two generations ago, financing princes, little wars—everything. One night in Bombay the burden of his wealth broke his nerve; he stood at the window of his hotel, and flung masses of money to the mob. Soon after came a stranger, and said to him, "You have insulted the fourth of the great powers that rule this world; it shall be taken from you." It was so; he lost all. In the end he became, after a fashion, Sannyasi, and died (I suppose) in the usual odour.

I thought of this incident in Paris in the twenties, when I saw American tourists plaster the bonnets of their cars with 1000 franc notes, or tear them up and strew the floors of banks with them. Grimly I prognosticated Twenty-Nine. And it was so.

"Nice work!" you charmingly remark; but hardly what I sought to know." Patience, child!

Money being the fourth great power, "what are the other three?" Come, come, you can surely do that in your head. Four's Tetragrammaton, isn't it?

Very well, then! The First Great Power is Yod, the Father. Fire, the Wand, the Flame of Creative Genius. The Second is Hç, the Mother, Water, the Cup, the Sea to which all things tend; it is the gift of pleasing, of absorbing, of drawing all things to oneself.

The Third is Vau, the Son, the Sword, the moving, penetrating element, double in nature. For it is intellect, but also the result of Genius absorbed, interpreted,

transmuted and applied through the virtue of the Cup to expand, to explain, to bring into conscious existence.

And the Fourth is the Hè final, the Daughter, Earth, the Disk, Pantacle, or Coin—the Coin on which is stamped the effigy of the Word that begat it with the aid of the other forms of Energy. It is the Princess of the Tarot of whom it is written: "Great indeed is her power when thus firmly established."

It is a trite, and not quite true, saying that money can buy nothing worth having. But it can command service, the real measure of power, and leisure; without these two advantages the most brilliant genius is practically paralysed. It can do much to secure health, or to restore it. The truth is that money is only troublesome when one begins to count it.

(This epigram is copyright in Basutoland, the United States of America, the Republic of San Marino, the Sanjak of Novibazar, Arabia Petraea, and the Scandinavian countries.)

Then there is travel, by which I do not mean globe-trotting; and privacy, less attainable every year as the Meddlesome Matties invade every corner of life.

But this is by the way; the text, tenor and thesis of the illuminated and illuminating discourse is the above Epigram, which is not merely one of the extravagant absurdities for which I am justly infamous. It is the Pearl of Great Price. Observe that, formally it is a generalization of the principle of the old injunction "to buy the egg of a perfectly black hen without haggling." I want you to realize the supreme importance of this. For one thing, it goes hand-in-hand with the whole doctrine of so-called renunciation—which is nothing of the sort. You don't "renounce" five shillings if you pay that for a country house with 3000 acres of shooting, and the best salmon fishing on Deeside, do you? This is the Greater Interpretation of the Injunction, that no *equation* is possible: Magical Power is *immeasurably* more valuable than any amount of money. But the Epigram is severely practical. It may sound a little romantic, but—here goes! A community which thinks in terms of wealth is rich; in terms of money, poor. How so? Because the former includes the imponderables.

A couple of Japanese wrestlers may be worth more than Phidias, Robert Browning, Titian and Mozart in terms of butchers' meat. We might alter that incorrect truism "money cannot by anything worth having" to "things worth having cannot be estimated in terms of money." You see, no *counting*. The operation to save your

child's life: do you care if the surgeon wants five pounds or fifty? Of course, you may not have the fifty, or be obliged to retrench in other ways to get it; but it makes no odds as to what you feel about it. What is the value of a University Education? The answer is that it is a pure gamble. The student may use his advantages to make a rich marriage, to attract the wife of a millionaire, to earn a judgeship or a post in the Cabinet, to earn £500 a year as a doctor, £150 as a schoolmaster—or he may die in the process. So with all the spiritual values; they are, in the most literal sense, inestimable. So—don't start to count!

Most obviously of all, when it comes to The Great Work, money does not count at all. I do not write of any Magical work, in the restricted sense of the phrase. Shaw says: "Admirals always want more battleships" and J.F.C. Fuller: "if a lawyer, more wretches to hang." It applies to any one whose heart is in his job. (Of course, in this case, money is like all other things of value; nothing counts but the Job.) This, too, is sound Magical doctrine.

Lack of money is another matter altogether.

Isn't it about time you sent me a cheque?

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

1) No money-lender in the drunkenness of guilt plus the delirium of cocaine fortified by buckets of hashish would dare dream of getting such interest on his capital as these vampires.

Chapter 56

Marriage—Property—War Politics

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Directly or indirectly, you have already all you need about marriage in its relation to Magical Traning. The Hindu proverb sums it all up: "There are seven kinds of wife—like a mother, a sister, a daughter, a mistress, a friend, an enemy and a slave; of these the only good one is the last."

But from your questions I gather that what you want is advice on how to advise, how marriage as an institution is regarded by The Book of the Law. Very good.

It is not actually mentioned; but that it is contemplated is shown by the use of the word "wife"—AL I, 41. The text confirms my own thesis "There shall be no property in human flesh." So long as this is observed I see no reason why two or more people should not find it convenient to make a contract according to the laws of customs of their community.

But my above thesis is all important; note the fury of denunciation in AL I, 41-42!

As to property in general, the Book lays down no law. So far as one can see, it seems to adhere to "the good old rule, the simple plan that they should take who have the power, and they should keep who can."

I think that your best course is to work out all such problems for yourself; at least it is an admirable if arduous, mental exercise. One ought, theoretically, to be able to deduce the ideal system from the Magical Formula of the Aeon of Horus.

Now then, as to war. You need hardly have asked the question; the whole Book is alive with it; it thrills, it throbs, it tingles on almost every page. It even goes into details. Strategy: "Lurk! Withdraw! Upon them! …" AL III, 9. Then AL III, 3 - 8. England, I suppose. Verse 6 suggests the mine-layer to any one who has seen

one in action. Verse 7 might refer to the tank or the aeroplane—or to something we haven't yet got.

Notice also Verse 28, a surprising conclusion to the long magical instruction about the "Cakes of Light." Then the mysterious opening of Verse 46 demands attention and research! Can "…the Forties:…" refer to the years '39 (e.v.) onward—will this war last till '49 (e.v.)? Can the "…Eighties…" be symbolic, as the decade in which universal peace seemed to nearly everybody as assured for an indefinite period?

There are any number of other passages, equally warlike; but see II, 24. It is a warning against internecine conflict between the masters; see also III 58,59. Hitler might well quote these two reminders that the real danger is the revolt of the slave classes. They cannot rule or build; no sooner do they find themselves in a crisis than mephitic rubbish about democracy is swept into the dustbin by a Napoleon or a Stalin.

There is just one exception to the general idea of ruthlessness; some shadowy vision of a chivalrous type of warfare is granted to us in AL III, 59: Significant, perhaps, that this and a restatement of Thelema came immediately before "There is an end of the word of the God enthroned in Ra's seat, lightening the girders of the soul." (AL III, 61) And this is "As brothers fight ye!" Perhaps the Aeon may give birth to some type of warfare "under Queensbery rules" so to say. A baptism of those who assert their right to belong to the Master class. Something, in short, not wholly dissimilar from the jousts of Feudal times. But on such points I should not care to adventure any very positive opinion.

The last part of your question refers to politics. "The word politics surprises by himself," as Count Smorltork observed. Practically all those parts of the Book which deal with social matters may be considered as political in the old an proper sense of the word; of modern politics it disdains to speak.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally yours,

666

Chapter 57

Beings I have Seen with my Physical Eye

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Well do you know my lifelong rule never to make any assertion that cannot be verified, or at least supported by corroborative evidence, on any subject pertaining to Magick.

When, therefore, you express curiosity as to how much of the normally super-sensible world has been revealed to my senses, and especially that of sight, you must take my answer as "without prejudice," "e. and o.e.", "under the rose," and "in a Pickwickian sense." If you choose to call me a lunatic and/or a liar, I shall accept the verdict with mine accustomed imperturbability. Whether what I am about to tell you is "true" or not doesn't matter, as in any case it proves nothing in particular. What does matter is to accept nothing whatever from the "Astral Plane" without the most conclusive and irrefragable internal evidence.

That is enough for the caveat part of it; now I plunge direct into the autobiographical.

I begin with my childhood. There is one incident, not quite relevant in this place, but yet of such supreme significance that I dare not omit it. I must have been about 6 years old. I was capering round my father during a walk through the meadows. He pointed out a bunch of nettles in the corner of the field, close to the gate (I an see it quite clearly to-day!) and told me that if I touched them they would sting. Some word, gesture, or expression of mine caused him to add: Would you rather be told, or learn by experience? I replied, instantly: I would rather learn by experience. Suiting the action to the word, I dashed forward, plunged in the clump, and learnt.

This incident is the key to the puzzle of my character. But, as a child, what did I see? I cannot think of any one person who subsequently devoted his life to Magick who has not at least one early experience of seeing angels, or fairies, or something of the sort. But A.C.? Nary a one. I was brought up on the Bible, a literalist, fundamentalist—all that a Plymouth Brother could wish. It never occurred to me to doubt a word of what I was told. Perhaps the Wolf's Tail of an healthy scepticism gleamed pale at the age of 10, when I asked my form master how it was that Christ managed to be dead for three days and three nights between Friday night and Sunday morning. He said that he did not know, and (to a further question) that no one had ever explained it. This merely filled me with ambition to be the great exegetist who *had* explained it. I never thought of doubting the story.

Well, all this time, and then through puberty, despite my romantic bent, my absorption in the gramarye of Sir Walter Scott, my imaginative life as one of his heroes, and the rest of it. I never had even a moment's illusion that anything of the sort had ever happened to me. I went through all the motions; I haunted all the places where such things are reputed likely to happen, but nothing did happen.

There is one exception, and one only.

It was in 1896, at Arolla in the Pennine Alps. I took my cousin, Gregor Grant, a fine climber but with little experience beyond scrambles, and in poor physical condition, for the second (first guideless) ascent of the N.N.E. ridge of Mont Collon, a long and exacting climb of more than average difficulty. I had to help him with the rope for most of the climb. This made us late. I dashed for the quickest way down, a short but very steep ridge with one decidedly bad patch, to the great snowfield at the head of the valley. At the bottom of the last pitch a scree-strewn slope, easy going, led to the snows. We took off the rope, and I sat down to coil it and light a pipe, while he wandered down. By this time I was as tired as 14 dogs, each one more tired than all the rest put together; what I call “silly tired.” I took a chance (for nightfall was near) on resting 5 or 10 minutes. Restored, I sprang to my feet, threw the coiled rope over my shoulder, and started to run down. But I was too tired to run; I slackened off.

Then, to my amazement, I saw of the slopes below me, two little fellows hopping playfully about on the scree. (A moment while I remind you that all my romance was Celtic; I had never ever read Teutonic myths and fables.) But these little men were exactly the traditional gnome of German fold-tales; the Heinzelmänner that

one sees sometimes on German beer-mugs (I have never drunk beer in my life) and in friezes on the walls of a Conditorei.

I hailed them cheerfully—at first I thought they were some of the local nobility and gentry of a type I had not yet encountered; but they took no notice, just went on playing about. They were still at it when I reached my cousin, sheltering behind some boulders at the foot of the slope; and I saw no more of them.

I saw them as plainly as I ever saw anything; there was nothing ghostly or semi-transparent about them.

A curious point is that I attached no significance to this. I asked my cousin if he had seen them; he said no.

My mind accepted the incident as simply as if I had seen Chamois. Yet even to-day when I have seen lots and lots of things more wonderful, this incident stands out as the simplest and clearest of all my experiences. I give myself full marks!

"Why?" Isn't it obvious? It means that I am not the semi-hysterical type who takes wish-phantasms for facts. When I started seriously to study and practise Magick in the Autumn of '98 e.v., I wished and wished with all my might; but I never got anything out of it. With the exception above recorded, my first experiences were the direct result of intense magical effort on the traditional lines; there was no accident about it; when I evoked N to visible appearance, I got N and nobody else. But even so, there isn't much to splash!

The first definitely physical sight was due to the "evocation to visible appearance" of the Goetia demon Buer by myself and V.H. Frater "Volo Noscere."[1] (Our object was to prolong the life, in imminent danger, of V.H. Frater Iehi Aour—Allan Bennett—Bhikkhu Ananda Metteya—and was successful; he lived another 20 odd years. And odd years they were!)

I was wide awake, keyed up, keenly observant at the time.

The temple was approximately 16 feet by 8, and 12 high. A small "double-cube" altar of acacia was in the centre of a circle; outside this was a triangle in which it was proposed to get the demon to appear. The room was thick with the smoke of incense, some that of Abramelin, but mostly, in a special censer in the triangle, Dittany of Crete (we decided to use this, as H.P.B. once said that its magical virtue was greater than that of any other herb).

As the ceremony proceeded, we were aware that the smoke was not uniform in thickness throughout the room, but tended to be almost opaquely dense in some parts of it, all but clear in others. This effect was much more definite than could possibly be explained by draughts, of by our own movements. Presently it gathered itself together still more completely, until it was roughly as if a column of smoke were rising from the triangle, leaving the rest of the room practically clear.

Finally, at the climax of the ritual—we had got as far as the "stronger and more potent conjuration"—we both saw, vaguely enough, but yet beyond doubt, parts of a quite definite figure. In particular, there was a helmet suggesting Athene (or horror! Brittania!), part of a tunic or chlamys, and very solid footgear. (I thought of "the well-greaved Greeks.") Now this was very far from satisfactory; it corresponded in no wise with the appearance of Buer which the Goetia had led us to expect. Worse, this was as far as it went; no doubt, seeing it at all had disturbed our concentration. (This is where training in Yoga would have helped our Magick.) From that point it was all a wash-out. We could not get back the enthusiasm necessary to persist. We called it a day, did the banishings, closed the temple, and went to bed with our tails between our legs.

(And yet, from a saner point of view, the Operation had been a shining success. "Miraculous" things began to happen; in one way and another the gates opened for Allan to migrate to less asthmatic climes; and the object of our work was amply attained.)

I give prominence to this phenomenon because what we saw, little and unsatisfactory as it was, appeared to our normal physical sight. I learned later that there is a kind of sight half-way between that and the astral. In a "regular" astral vision one sees better when the eyes are shut; with this intermediate instrument, to close them would be as completely annihilating as if the vision were an ordinary object of sight.

It seems, too, as if I had picked up something of the sort as an aftereffect of the Evocation of Buer—a Mercurial demon; for phenomena of one sort or another were simple showered on me from this moment, pari passu with my constantly improving technique in regular "astral visions." Sometimes I was quite blind, as compared with Frater V.N.; for when the circles was broken one nightùsee the whole story in my Autohagiography—he saw and identified dozens and scores of Abramelin demons as they marched widdershins around my library, while all I saw

of them was a procession of “half-formed faces” moving shadowy through the dimly-lit room.

When it was a matter of the sense of touch, it was far otherwise; I got it good and hearty—but that is not the subject of this letter. I find all this excessively tedious; I resent having to write about it at all; I wonder whether I am breaking some beastly by-law; in fact, I shall ask you to be content with Buer as far as details go; I never saw anything of importance with purely physical sight with anything like the clarity of my adventure on Mont Collon.

Yes, as I think it over, that by-law is to thank. This Spring I saw very plainly, on four separate occasions, various beings of another order than ours. I was ass enough to tell one or two pupils about it…

And I've never been able to see any more. This, however, it is a positive duty to tell you. One can acquire the power of seeing, with this kind of sight that is neither wholly normal nor wholly astral, all the natural inhabitants of the various places that one reaches in one's travels; one can make intimate contact with individual “elementals” as closely as one can with human beings or animals, although the relation is rarely continuous or permanent.

The conditions of such intercourse are complex: (*a*) one must have the necessary degree of initiation, magical efficiency, and natural ability; (*b*) one must be at the time in the appropriate magical state, or mood; (*c*) both parties must desire to make the contact, or else one must be lawfully the superior, a master and slave relationship, (d) the magical conditions at the time must be suitable and propitious; e.g., one would not make love to a salamandrine during a sandstorm. Of course, like all operations, any such efforts must be justified by their consoance with one's True Will.

On this note I end this abortive letter.

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

1) Lat., “I want to know.” George Cecil Jones.

Chapter 58

"Do Angels Ever Cut Themselves Shaving?"

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

A very witty way to put it! "Do angels ever cut themselves shaving?" *Rem acu tetigisti*,[1] again. (English: you big tease?)

What sort of existence, what type or degree of reality, do we attribute to them? (By angel, of course, you mean any celestial—or infernal—being such as are listed in the Hierarchy, from Metatron and Ratziel to Lilith and Nahema.) We read of them, for the most part, as if they were persons—although of another order of being; as individual, almost, as ourselves. The principal difference is that they are not, as we are, microcosmic. The Angels of Jupiter contain all the Jupiter there is, within these limits, that their rank is not as high as their Archangel, nor as low as their Intelligence or their Spirit. But their Jupiter is pure Jupiter; no other planet enters into their composition.

We see and hear them, usually (in my own experience) as the result of specific invocation. Less frequently we know them through the sense of touch as well; sometimes their presence is associated with a particular perfume. (This, by the way, is very striking, since it has to overcome that of the incense.) I must very strongly insist, at this point, on the difference between "gods" and "angels." Gods are macrocosmic, as we microcosmic: an incarnated (materialised) God is just as much a person, an individual animal, as we are; as such, he appeals to all our senses *exactly* as if he were "material."

But everything sensible is matter in some state or other; how then are we to regard an Angel, complete with robes, weapons, and other impedimenta? (I have never known a god thus encumbered, when he has been "materialised" at all. Of course,

the mere *apparition* of a God is subject to laws similar to those govering the visions of angels.)

For one thing, all the laws that we find in operation on various parts of the "Astral Plane" are valid. Two things can occupy the same place at the same time. They are "swift without feet, and flying without wings."[2)] They change size, shape, appearance, appurtenances of all sorts, at will. Anything that is required for the purpose of the vision is there at will. They bring their own background with them. They are able to transfer a portion of their energy to the seer by spontaneous action without appreciable means.

But here is where you question arises—what is their "life" like? In the visions, they never do anything but "go through the motions" appropriate to their nature and to the character of the vision.

Are we to conclude that the whole set of impressions is no more than symbolic? Is it all a part of oneself, like a daydream, but a daydream intensified and made "real" because its crucial incidents turn out to be true, as must always occur during the testing of the genuiness of the vision?

Shall we infringe Sir William Hamilton's Law of Parsimony if we extend our conception of our own powers, and conclude that the vision is but a manifestation of our Unconscious, presented in a symbolic form convenient for our understanding?

I'm sorry, but I can't let it go at that! Some of my own experiences have been so confoundedly objective that it just won't work. So there we are back to your original question about shaving and I fear me sorely that "Occam's razor" will help us no whit.

It seems to me much simpler to say that these Angels are "real" individuals, although living in a world of whose laws we have no conception; and that, in order to communicate with us, they make use of the symbolic forms appropriate; employ, in short, the language of the Astral Plane.

After all, it's only fair; for that is precisely what we do to them when we invoke them.

Ha! Ha! Ha! I suppose you think you've caught me out in an evasion there! Not so, dear child, not so: this state of affairs is nothing strange.

Ask yourself: “What do I know of Therion's mode of life?” Whenever I see him, he's always on his best behaviour.“ I've hardly ever seen him eat; perhaps he does so only when I am there, so as not to embarrass me by a display of his holiness.” His universe touches mine at only a very few points.“ The mere fact of his being a man, and I a woman, makes sympathetic understanding over a vast range of experience almost impossible, certainly imperfect.” Then all his reading and his travels touch mine at very few points.“ And his ignorance of music makes it an almost grotesque extension of magnanimity for me to admit his claim to belong to the human species . . . U.S.W.[3]“ Then: “How do we manage to communicate at all? There is bound to be an impassable gulf between us at the best, when one considers that his connotation of the commonest words like 'mountain', 'girl', 'school', 'Hindu', 'oasis', is so vastly different from mine. But to do it *at all*! What actually have we done?”

Think it out!

We have made a set of queerly-shapen marks on a sheet of paper, given them names, attached a particular sound to each, made up (God knows how and why!) combinations of these, given names and sounds to them too, and attached a meaning—hardly ever the same for you as for me—to them, made combinations of these too according to a set of quite arbitrary rules, agreed—so far as agreement is possible, or even thinkable—to label a thought with some such arrangement: and there we are! You have in this fantastically artificial way succeeded in conveying your thought to my mind.

Now, turn back to *Magick*; read there how we work to establish intelligible intercourse between ourselves and the “angels.”

If you can find any difference between that method and this, it is more than I can.

Finally, please remember as a general rule that *all* magical experience is perfectly paralleled by the simplest and commonest phenomena of our daily life!

People who tell you that it is “all quite different beyond the Veil” or what not, are blithering incompetents totally ignorant of the nature of things.

Incidentally, Bertrand Russell has given us a superb mathematical proof of this theorem; but I won't afflict you with it at this time of asking.

On the contrary, I will tell you more about “communication.”

There is a method of using Ethyl Oxide which enables one (a) to analyse one's thoughts with a most exquisite subtlety and accuracy, (b) to find out—in the French phrase—"what is at the bottom of the bottle." By this they mean the *final* result of any project or investigation; and this, surprisingly often, is not at all what it is possible to discover by any ordinary means.

For instance, one might ask oneself "Do I believe in God?" and, after a vast number of affirmative answers of constantly increasing depth and subtlety, discover with a shock that "at the bottom of the bottle" one believed nothing of the sort! Or vice versa.

On one occasion the following experiment was carried out. A certain Adept was to make use of the Sacred Vapour, and when the time seemed ripe, to answer such questions as should be put to him by his Scribe. Presently, after about an hour's silence, the Scribe asked: "Is communication possible?" But this he meant merely to enquire whether it would now be in order for him to begin to ask his prepared list of questions.

But the Adept thought that this *was* Question No. 1: meaning "Is there any valid means of making contact between two minds?"

He remained intensely silent—intensely, as opposed to his previous rather fidgety abstention from talking—for a very long time, and then broke slowly into a long seductive ripple of hushed laughter, suggestive of the possession of some ineffably delicious secret, of a moonlight revel of Pan with his retinue of Satyrs, nymphs and fauns.

I shall say no more, save to express the hope that you have understood this story, and the Truth and Beauty of this answer.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally yours,,

666

1) Lat. "You've hit the nail on the head" (lit. "you've touched the matter with a needle."

2) Swinburne, Atalanta in Calydon.

3) U.S.W is German for "etc." – W.E.H.

Chapter 59

Geomancy

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Your last letter has really put me up a gum tree. I do not see how I can write you an account of Geomancy. At first sight it looks as if all I could do was to refer you to the official text book of that sublime and difficult art. You will find in the *Equinox*, Volume I, No. 2. (or am I mistaken and its is No. 4?) I cannot bother to refer to it, and the books are not under my hand.[1)]

There is, of course, a short account in *Magick* and I do not think that it is a very satisfactory one, certainly not in view of what you have asked me. No, it certainly won't do at all.

The main point of your letter appears to be a question as to whether I think it worth your while to devote a great amount of time to it; whether its usefulness repays the pains required to master it.

Now here we come to a question of personality. The first thing to remember about Geomancy is that although the various intelligences are attributed to the twelve signs of the Zodiac they all appertain to the element of earth. Anyone therefore who has got in his nativity an earthy sign rising, or the sun in an earthly sign, or a good proportion of planets in an earthy sign, is much more likely to find Geomancy attractive than anyone the principal features of whose horoscope are devoted to other elements, especially air, which of course is the enemy of earth.

Now these remarks apply of course very much to the type of question that is likely to be within the grasp of the Geomantic Intelligences, that must certainly be considered as well as the natural faculty of the practitioner to master the art.

I ought of course to emphasize that I am just the worst person in the habitable globe that you could have asked about this matter, as my rising sign and my planets are all in fire, air, or water, except Neptune, which as Astrology teaches, refers not so much to the Native as to the period of life.

It has accordingly been exceptionally difficult for me to be of much use to people who have come to me with enquiries similar to yours, still more when they have planted themselves down solidly at my feet and insisted on my teaching them. There is, however, a certain meagre harvest to be gained from my experience. I should like to tell you what happened to such a man.[2)]

A resident of Johannesburg and singularly gifted with the power of getting physical results to take place as a result of Magical experiments. This man was as strongly attracted to Geomancy as I was repelled, and I do not know that it would be fair for me to claim that I had been of any special use to him, though he was always kind enough to say so.

When I pointed out that the answers to Geomantic questions were so vague and indeterminate he had already devised a method whereby this difficulty (which he admitted as existing) could be overcome.

It is of course of the very first importance in Geomancy to frame your questions accurately; for the Intelligences serving the Art delight in tricksome gambols. If there is a possibility of assigning a double meaning to the question you can bank on their finding it, and deceiving you.

Of all this my disciple was well aware; and he had become extremely artful in allowing no ambiguity to spoil any of his questions.

But as to the further difficulty about their vagueness, what he did was to arrange a series of questions narrowing the issue step by step until he had succeeded in obtaining a precise instruction which would resolve his original difficulty.

I do think, as a matter of fact, that I was able to help to some extent on the purely theoretical side of the Art, and he went back to South Africa feeling himself fully equipped to deal with any problem that might arise.

At that time we were particularly anxious to wind up the first volume of the *Equinox* with a No. 10, which should be a really massive contribution to Magical thought. That meant a very considerable increase in the cost of production. All this my Disciple, of course, knew, and on arriving in Johannesburg he said to himself "Well, here I am in a part of the world where the earth teams with gold and diamonds. I will procure the necessary funds for the *Equinox*_and various other financial necessities of the Work by Geomantic divination.

Now, then, he thought, in and about Johannesburg we have both gold and diamonds; that is exactly the chance for these tricky earth spirits to take advantage of the ambiguity. I will therefore frame the question so as to cover both sources of riches. I will not specify gold or diamonds. I will say simply “mineral wealth.”

The answers to his series of questions indicated that he was to go out of the city where he would find a deposit.

The next questions in his series were directed to finding the direction in which he should start his exploration. That was easy.

The next question was the distance involved, and he could think of no way of framing questions which would inform him on that very important point. He got at it indirectly, however, by asking as to his means of transport, and as to that the answer was quite clear and unmistakable.

He was to use a horse.

Well, he had a Boer pony, and next morning he set forth with provisions for a day's journey.

On and on he went and found no geological indication of any mineral wealth. Presently he began to get tired and thought it was a little late. He could see in every direction across the Veldt and there was nothing at all. A mile or so in front of him, however, was a row of small kopjes. He said, I may as well go on and get a view from the top.

This he did; and there was still no geological pointer. It struck him, however, that he was getting short of water; and just below on the far side of the kopje were a number of apparently shallow pools.

“I will fill my skin and give my horse a drink and get home feeling like a fool.”

But, when he got to the water, his horse turned sharply aside and refused to drink. At that he dismounted and put his finger in the water to test it. He had struck one of the most important deposits of alkali in South Africa. Mineral wealth indeed!

He went home rejoicing and took the necessary steps to protect his find. In the course of the formalities he found it necessary to come to London, which he did, and told me the whole story.

Unfortunately we end with an anti-climax. The negotiations went wrong; and the property was stolen from under his nose by one of the big alkali firms. However, it was a good mark for Geomancy.

I am afraid that all this is a digression. As I indicated above, what you want to know is to be found in the official instruction on the subject in the *Equinox*.

Now far be it from me to cast any doubt on any official instruction, but I cannot help saying that in this particular instance it does not give very full details, and I think you would be well advised to investigate the whole subject afresh, basing you enquiry on the general principles of the science.

You will presumably have noticed that the Geomantic figures are derived from taking the permutations of two things, four at a time, just as the trigrams of Fu-Hsi are two things taken three at a time, and the Hexagrams of the *Yi* are two things taken six at a time.

The system is consequently based upon 16 figures and no more. Of course all systems of divinations which have any claim to be reasonable are based upon a map of the universe, or at least the Solar system, and 16 is really rather a limited number of units to manipulate.

However, if you are the type of person who has a natural bent towards this particular Art you will be able to develop it on your own lines, guided by your own experience.

I do not think there is anything further to add to these scattered remarks except that so far as I know none of the treatises on the subject (with the single exception of the official instruction) are any use at all.

I feel rather acutely how unsatisfactory these remarks must sound to you, but it is the best that I can do for you. You must regard it either as an excuse, or a confession of incompetence, that I have always had this instinctive distaste for the subject.

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

1) The item on "Geomancy" is in Equinox, Vol I, No. 2. The method provided there is the French adaptation of an African method like the Ifa Oracle of the Yoruba people at Great Zimbabwe. This technique has superficial similarities to the Yi King, and four-line Geomancy was known in Europe from late Medieval times. The

Geomancy mentioned in The Sacred Magic of Abra-Melin and in a few stories of the Arabian Nights is usually based on recognition of shapes, including Arabic letters, in randomly disturbed sand. This French method uses a count of odd or even in a series of random strikes against a sand or earth surface to determine the figure – WEH.

The instruction in the Equinox is taken almost verbatim from a Golden Dawn paper, itself adapted from the treatise on Geomancy attributed to Agrippa which was published in the 16th century (see Agrippa, Opera, vol. I). Certain crucial omissions were made and the method was delineated very unclearly; the version in Regardie (ed.) The Golden Dawn is more intelligible although it omits some of the tables which appear in the Equinox publication – T.S.

2) According to the version of this story in Confessions, this was James Windram, Frater Semper Paratus, who later became head of the South African section of the O.T.O. under Crowley – T.S.

Chapter 60

Knack

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

I am very glad that it has not been necessary in all this long correspondence with you, to discuss the question of Knack. You seem to be specially gifted; you were able to get the results directly from following out the instructions, and I am glad that it is through you, on behalf of other people, to whom you have communicated these instructions, that this letter has become necessary.

When Otto Morningstar was trying (with indifferent success) to teach me how to play French Billiards in Mexico City I found one particular difficulty, and that was how to play the massé shot. He kept on explaining and explaining and demonstrating and demonstrating, and none of it seemed any good. I understood intellectually, well enough; but somehow or other it never came off. Presently he said that he guessed he knew what was the matter. Although I had the whole thing perfect in my mind I had not made the link between my mind, my eye and my hand, and what I must do was *not* to go to him for teaching, of which I had had already enough and more than enough. He told me if I went on trying it would happen quite suddenly and unexpectedly one day that I found I could do it. This was particularly decent of him because it was in direct contradiction with his financial interest. But he was an all-round good man.

So I cut him out so far as the massé shot was concerned and redoubled my practice of it. What he said came out right; one day I found that I had acquired the knack of it.

Now with these semi-pupils of yours the same thing probably applies.

The point you raise in particular as baffling them is the getting on to the astral plane. It is not much good explaining why the failure occurs, or at what point it occurs; the only thing that is any use is for the pupil to go on and on and on

eternally. He must find out for himself where the snag is, and he must continue his experiment until he acquires the knack.

All this should be perfectly obvious; the same sort of thing applies to every kind of game which you know. There is a particular knack for instance in putting. It is not that your calculations are wrong, it is not that your stance is wrong, it is not that your grip is wrong, it is that for some reason or other you fail to co-ordinate all these various factors in the problem; and sooner or later the moment comes when it appears to you quite natural to succeed in getting out of the body, or in opening the eyes on the astral plane, or in getting hold of the particular form of elemental energy which has until that moment escaped you.

I have mentioned the question of astral journeys because that is one which in your experience, as indeed it has been in mine, is the one that most frequently occurs.

I do not know why it is that people should get so easily discouraged as they do. I can only suggest that it is because they are touching so sensitive a spot in their spiritual and magical organisation that it upsets them; they feel as if they were completely hopeless in a much more serious way than if it was a matter of learning some trick in some such game as chess or billiards.

Of course, the worst of it is that failure in these early stages is liable to destroy their confidence in the teacher, and I think it would be a very wise plan on your part to warn them about that.

I ought incidentally to mention that this sudden illumination—that is not quite the right word but I cannot think of a better one—is quite different to the sudden confidence which takes hold of one in the Yoga practices, the more I think of it the more I feel that the question of sensitiveness is of the greatest importance.

In Yoga practices one does not, at least as far as my experience goes, come against the delicacy that one does in all magical and astral practices. The reason for what is, I think, quite obvious. All the Yoga practices are ultimately of the protective type, whereas with magical and astral practices one is exposing oneself to the contact of exterior (or apparently exterior) forces. In neither case however is there any sort of reason at all for discouragement; and as I said above the cure in all cases is apparently the same.

In one way or another the veil is rent, the pupil becomes the master, and the reason for that is really rather beyond my analysis so far as that has gone at present. I do not know whether it is some kind of awakening of some faculty of the magical self,

though that seems to me the simplest and most probable explanation; but in any case there is no doubt about the nature of the experience, and there can be no difficulty about the recognition of it when it occurs.

Now, dear Sister, I hope that this letter may be of real use to you in dealing with those difficult semi-pupils. In particular I hope that you will make a point of insisting on how encouraging this doctrine is. Your pupils must not calculate; that indeed is one point where the magical record is rather a hindrance than otherwise.

It reminds me of the story of the Psychologist who wanted to judge the difference in temperament between an Englishman, as Scotsman and an Irishman, in judging the amount of Whisky in a bottle in the next room. They had to go in, report, and come back, and tell him what they thought about it. He filled it 50% with great accuracy.

The Irishman came back fairly cheerful; he rubbed his hands; “Well, there's half a bottle left, your honour.”

When the Scotsman came back his face was full of gloom: “I'm afraid,” he says, “that half a bottle has gone.”

Then the Englishman had his turn. He came in all over smiles, rubbing his hands, and said: “There's not a drop left, so that's that.”

Moral—Be English!

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

Chapter 61

Power and Authority

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Thanks very much for your last letter. I expected no less. As soon as anybody gets into a position of authority, even on a very small scale, their troubles begin on a very large one.

Imagine, if you can, what I have been through in the last quarter of a century or more. My subordinates are always asking me for advancement in the Order; they think that if they were only members of the 266th degree everything in the garden would be lovely. They think that if they only possessed the secrets of the 148th degree they would be able to perform all those miracles which at present escape them.

These poor fish! They do not understand the difference between Power and Authority. They do not understand that there are two kinds of degrees, altogether different.

For instance, in the theory of the Church of Rome a bishop is a person on whom has been conferred the magical power to ordain priests. He may choose a totally unworthy person for such ordination, it makes no difference; and the priest, however unworthy he may be, has only to go through the correct formulæ which perform the miracle of the Mass, for that miracle to be performed. This is because in the Church we are dealing with a religious as opposed to a magical or scientific qualification. If the Royal Society elected a cobbler, as it could, it would not empower the New Fellow to perform a boiling-point determination, or read a Vernier.

In our own case, though Our authority is at least as absolute as that of the Pope and the Church of Rome, it does not confer upon me any power transferable to others by any act of Our will. Our own authority came to Us because it was earned, and

when We confer grades upon other people Our gift is entirely nugatory unless the beneficiary has won his spurs.

To put it in a slightly different form of words: Any given degree is, as it were, a seal upon a precise attainment; and although it may please Us to explain the secret or secrets of any given degree or degrees to any particular person or persons, it is not of the slightest effect un- less he prove in his own person the ability to perform those functions which all We have done is to give him the right to perform and the Knowledge how to perform.

The further you advance in the Order the more will you find yourself pestered by people who have simply failed to understand this point of Magical theory.

Another thing is that the business of teaching itself is a very tricky one; even such simple matters as travelling on the astral plane are not to be attained by any amount of teaching unless the pupil has both the capacity and the energy as well as the theoretical and intellectual ability to carry out successfully the practices. (I have already said a good deal about this in my letter on Knack.)

I have thought it most important that you should impress upon everybody these points. It is absolutely pitiful to watch the vain struggle of the incompetent; they are so earnest, so sincere, so worthy in every way of every possible reward and yet they seem unable to advance a single step.

There is another side to this matter which is really approximating to the criminal. There are any number of teachers and masters and bishops and goodness knows what else running around doing what is little better than peddling grades and degrees and secrets. Such practices are of course no better than common fraud.

Please fix it firmly in you mind that with Us any degree, any position of authority, any kind of rank, is utterly worthless except when it is merely a seal upon the actual attainment or achievement.

It must seem to you that I am beating a dead dog, that it is little better than waste of time for me to keep on insisting, as I am now doing, upon what any ordinary person would think was patent to the meanest intelligence; but as a matter of plain fact the further you advance in the Order, and the more people you get to know, the more you find this attitude, sometimes absurd and sometimes abominable, getting up and kicking you in the face.

This is one of the reasons why the older I grow and the more experience I have of human nature, the more am I convinced of the wisdom of the Chiefs of the A∴ A∴, where association with any other person except your immediate superior or the one of whom you are yourself in charge is discouraged in every possible way.

There are of course exceptions. It is necessary, though regrettably so, for personal instruction in the practices to be given or received. For all that, I wish I could show you 200 or 300 letters that I have received in the last twenty years or so: they tell me without a shadow of doubt that anything like fraternization leads only to mischief. When you wish instruction from your superior, it should be for definite points and nothing else. Any breach of this convention is almost certain to lead to one kind of trouble or another. It may in fact be regarded as a defect of concentration if communication between any two members of the Order should take place, except in cases of necessity.

I know that it must seem hard to the weaker brethren of the Order that we should make so little appearance of success in the Great Work to which we are all pledged. It is so universal a convention that success should be measured by members. People like to feel that they have hundreds of Lodges from whom they can obtain assistance in moments of discouragement.

But a far truer and deeper satisfaction is found when the student has contentedly gone on with his work all by his own efforts. Surely you have had sufficient example in these letters, where in moments of despair one suddenly awakes to the fact the despite all appearances one has been watched and guarded from a higher plane. I might say, in fact, that one such experience of the secret guardianship of the Chiefs of the Order is worth a thousand apparently sufficient witnesses to the facts.

I would have you lay this closely to your heart, dear Sister, and moreover always to keep in mind what I have written in this letter so that you may be able to recognise when the occasion arises how much better evidence of the power and intelligence of the Order is this to being constantly cheered up along the difficult way by incidents such as it is possible to explain by what might be considered normal circumstances.

Finally, let me insist that it is a definite symptom of Magical ill-health when the craving for manifestation of that power and intelligence come between the worker and his work.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

Chapter 62

The Elastic Mind

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

You ask me what I mean by an “elastic mind”—from our telephone conversation on Friday.

It is hard to define; but let me give you an example of the bad kind: an old riddle. “Why is a story like a ghost?” Because

“A story's a tale
a tail's a brush
a brush is a broom
a brougham is is a carriage
a carriage is a gig
a gig's a trap
a trap is a snare
a snare's a gin
gin is a spirit
and a spirit's a ghost.”

You will have noticed a logical blunder—usually *non distributio medii* or Hobson Jobson—at every step in the sorites. It is your instinctive, or instructed, objection to commit these that prevents your mind from actually moving on such lines.

But these “correspondences,” such as they are, ought to present themselves, be judged as false or true, and rejected or accepted accordingly.

The inelastic mind, on the other hand, is tied by training to a rigid sequence, so that it never gets a chance to think for itself.

To develop a mind properly it needs (*a*) “Lehrjahre” (a first-clas public school and university education, or the equivalent) when it learns all sides of a question, and is left free to judge for itself and (*b*) “Wanderjahre,” when it sees the world for itself,

not by any pre-arranged course (Cooks', Lunns', University Extension, Baedeker) but built up on the results of the Lehrjhre, foot or horseback, and avoid beaten tracks.

It is the Rosicrucian injunction to “wear the costume of the country in which your are travelling;” this is only another way of saying “When in Rome, do as the Romans do.” The object of this is not merely to avoid interference or annoyance, but to teach the mind to think down to the roots of the local customs. You learn also the great lesson of Thelema, that nothing is right or wrong in itself: as we say “Circumstances alter cases.” One trains oneself to adapt one's life to the impinging facts: to “cut one's coat according to one's cloth.” It leads one to the understanding of that great Principle of Compromise which has kept England's head above water through the tempests of a chiliad.

But always behind all these must be Will, the restraining and controlling purposefulness which prevents one getting flabby, as worn rubber does. (This is why no one is surprised to hear an ultra-Socialist minister deliver a speech that might have come from Pitt.) There must be a perfect readiness of the mind to consider all the possible reactions to any given situation, to judge exactly how far one should yield, and in what direction, and to act accordingly; but always on keen guard against the risk of snapping.

Remember that the slightest sign of inelasticity means that the rubber has already “perished;” and that the test of perfection is that one can “Snap back” to the original condition, with no trace of the stress to which it has been subjected.

Beyond all, be armed against the “doctrinaire” type of mind, in yourself or in another. One very soon falls into the habit of repeating ones pet ideas; as the French say. “C'est enfoncer une porte ouverte;” and, probably before you know it yourself, you have become that most obscene, abhorred and incurable of human monsters, a BORE.

I perceive a slight danger of this kind in the letter: moral, SHUT UP!

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

Chapter 63

Fear, a Bad Astral Vision

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Your letter of yesterday: so happy that my last was useful: but the vision! I must have failed to make myself clear. We shall come to that later in this letter.

It is reassuring to learn that you are two-thirds human! Greed, anger and sloth are the three Buddhist bed-rock badnesses; and you have certainly given the last a miss in baulk. It is my own darkest and deadliest foe, and oh how mighty! With me he *never* relaxes. Sounds a paradox! but so it is.

Now as to fear. In the Neophyte ceremony of G∴ D∴ when the bandage is first removed from the eyes of the Aspirant, Horus, who was in that Aeon "the Lord in the West," tells him: "Fear is failure, and the forerunner of failure: be thou therefore without fear for in the heart of the coward virtue abideth not."

Listen, my child! I, even I, *moi qui vous parle*, need no information about fear. When I was twelve years old, it was discovered that I had defective kidneys; the opinion, *nomine contradicente*, of the Medical Profession was that I could certainly never live to be twenty-one. (Some people think that they were right!) But after a couple of years with tutors in the wildest parts of the country, I was found well enough to go to a Public School. They soon found me out! This kidney weakness causes depression and physical cowardice, and the other boys were not sympathetic about kidneys, regarding them mostly as satisfactory parts of the body to punch.

Imagine my misery! The most powerful of all my passions—bar sloth—is Pride; and here was I, the object of universal contempt. So, when I was able to determine my own way of life, I observed mildly "Pike's Peak or bust!" and chose for my sports the two, mountain climbing and big-game shooting, reputed the most dangerous. It was a desperate remedy, but it worked. No half measures, either! I used to wander into the jungle alone, looking for tigers, and trusting to my sense of

direction to take me back to camp. All my mountain climbing was guideless, and a very great deal of it solitary.

Well, this is not an example for you to copy, is it? But it gives an idea of the principle "Take the bull by the horns." A practice easier to imitate was this following. In most great cities, always in Eastern cities, are black slums. Here one may find blind alleys, dark doorways open to unlighted houses. One may explore such places, looking for adventure—and it was rather a point of honour to accept the challenge in whatever form it took. Again, one may walk with deliberate carelessness into the traffic[1]; this practice does not in my considerable experience, conduce to one's personal popularity. Another idea was to hasten to cholera-stricken cities, to places where Yellow Jack, plague, typhoid and typhus, dysentery (*et hæc turba malorum*) were endemic; and (of course) big-game hunting takes one to the certainty of malarial fever, with no doctors (or worse, Bengali doctors!) within many a league.

The general principle seems to be "This boat carries Caesar and his Fortunes!" and no doubt Pride in its most Satanic degree is one's greatest asset. But the essence of the practice, as a practice, is to seek out and to face what one fears. Do not forget that courage implies fear—what else should fear be useful for?

Of course, fears differ greatly both in quality and in degree; and one must distinguish between rational fear, ignorance of which implies stupidity, brutishness, imbecility, or what have you, and the pathological fear which springs from mental or moral disorder. There are in fact many types of fear which may be uprooted by some form of psycho-analysis. Generally speaking, it is up to you to invent a practice to meet each specific case.

One moment, though, about the fear of death. The radical cure is the gaining of the magical memory. (See also AL I, 58) The more previous incarnations one can remember, the less important appears the moment when the curve of life dips below the horizon. (One *very* curious point: when one looks back at the moment of one of one's deaths, one exclaims: "By Jove! that *was* a narrow escape, and no mistake!" Escape from what? Me no savvy; but such is the fact.) How to acquire that Memory? The development of the Magical Record is by far the most important of one's weapons. How to use the Record is not easy to explain; but there is a sort of knack which comes to one suddenly. And there are certain types of Samadhi during the exercise of which these memories appear spontaneously, without warning of any kind.

There is comfort in the thought that the persistent practice of seeking out one's fears, analysing them and their causes, then deliberately evoking them to "come out, you cad, and fight!" (W.S. Gilbert), presently sets up a habit of mind which is a strong fortress against all fear's modes of assault; one springs automatically to action when a patrol sneaks up within range of one's guns.

Particularly useful against the fear of death is the punctual and vigorous performance of Liber Resh. Meditate on the sun in each station: his continuous and even way: the endless circle. That formula in the Tarot book is *most* valuable.

One excellent practice, the general idea of which can easily be adapted to a host of particular cases, is the use of the imagination.

Let me tell you how it worked in those early Air Raids on London. First, I looked at the question sensibly, taking the view that shelters and gas masks were soothing syrup with an element of booby-trap in it.

(J. B. S. Haldane in Spain, running to escape a bomb, found himself racing towards the exact spot where it fell.)

Let me tell you a fable from the East. It is one of those incomparably sublime blossoms of the Spirit of Islam, infinite depth of wisdom adorned with the most exquisite and delicate wit.

Contrast it with the poor thin propagandist stuff which passes for a parable in the Gospels! There is hardly one to be found worth remembering.

Isaak ben Hiddekel was a Jew of Baghdad. Though not in his first or even second youth, he was in such health, enjoyed such prosperity, and commanded such universal respect and devotion that every moment of his life was dear to him. Among his pleasures one of the chief was the friendship of the aged Mohammed ibn Mahmed of Bassorah, reputed a sage of no common stature, for (it was said) his piety had been rewarded with such gifts as the power to communicate with Archangels, angels, the Jinn, and even with Gabriel himself. However this may have been, he held Isaak in very great esteem and affection.

It was shortly after leaving his friend's house after a short visit to Baghdad that he met Death. "Good morning," said the saint. "I do hope you're not going to Isaak's, he is a very dear friend of mine." "No!" said Death, "not just now; but since you mention it, I shall be with him at moonrise on the thirteenth of next month. Sorry

he's a friend of yours; but no one knows better than you do that these things can't be helped."

Mohammed set off sadly for Bassorah. Indeed, as the days passed, the incident preyed upon his mind, until at last he resolved to risk the breach of professional confidence and warn his friend. He sent accordingly a letter of condolence and farewell.

But Isaak was a man of action. Prompt and stealthy, on the day appointed he saddled his best horse and so passed through the silent streets of the city in search of a refuge.

That evening Mohammed was returning from prayer "*Nowit asali fardh salat al maghrab Allahu akbar*" slowly and mournfully, when hardly halfway from the mosque to his house who should he meet but Death!

"Peace be with thee!" says Death. "And peace with thee," replied the sage. "But I did not expect to see thee here to-night; I thought you were to meet my friend Isaak, and he's in Baghdad." "It wants an hour yet of the time," says Death briskly; "and he's galloping hither as fast as he can."

At least, don't let the Gods have the laugh on you! Hello! Here's the *Book of Lies* again! What fun. Now I ring up POL 5410 and borrow the book and get the chapter we need copied and—oh! With luck we shall get this space filled in a month or two!

The Smoking Dog

Each act of man is the twist and double of an hare.

Love and Death are the greyhounds that course him.

God bred the hounds and taketh His pleasure in the sport.

This is the Comedy of Pan, that man should think he hunteth, while those hounds hunt him.

This is the Tragedy of Man, when facing Love and Death he turns to bay.

He is no more hare, but boar.

There are no other comedies or tragedies.

Cease then to be the mockery of God; in savagery of love and death live thou and die!

Thus shall His laughter be thrilled through with Ecstasy.

Very good! Now where were we? in the "blitz?" Oh, yes! No sense in scuffling or slinking or skulking; so one decides to take no notice so far as practical action is concerned.

So, the noise making work rather difficult, one lies down in Shavasana (the "Corpse-Position"—flat on the back, arms by sides, everything relaxed) or the Templar (Sleep of Siloam[2]) position, which is that of the Hanged Man in the Tarot. One then imagines a bomb dropping first in one place, then in another; one imagines the damage, and what one then has to do to counteract the new dangers—perhaps a wall of your house has gone, and you must get clear before the roof falls in. And so on—close the practice by a block-buster hitting you accurately on the tip of the nose.[3] This must be done realistically enough to make you actually afraid. But presently the fear wears off, and you get interested in your various adventures after each explosion: ambulance taking you to hospital, getting tools and digging out other people and so as far as your imagination takes you. After that comes yet another stage; your interest declines; you find yourself indifferent to the entire proceedings. After a few nights you can no longer distinguish between the real thing and your own private and peculiar Brock's Benefit. The fear will have vanished; familiarity breeds contempt. Finally, one is no longer even aware that the boys are out again on a lark.

Incidentally, one may draw a quite close parallel between these four stages and those accompanying Samadhi (probably listed in Mrs. Rhys David's book on Buddhist Psychology, or in Warren's bran-tub of translations from the *Tripitaka*, or *Three baskets of the Dhamma*. I haven't seen either book for forty years or more, don't remember the exact titles; scholars would help us to dig them out, but it isn't worth while. I recall the quintessence accurately enough.

Stage 1 is Ananda, usually translated "Bliss". This is an intensity of enjoyment altogether indescribable. This is due to the temporary destruction of the pain-bearing Ahamkara, or Ego-making faculty.

Stage 2. Ananda wears off sufficiently to allow one to observe the state itself: intense interest (objective) of a kind that suggests approach to the Trance of Wonder. (See Little Essays toward Truth, pp. 24-28).

Stage 3. Interest exhausted, one just doesn't care. (once more "Indifference" *Op. cit*. pp. 39-44. How simple, how serene, how innocent a pleasure to write *Op. cit*.! It *does* make one feel good!)

Stage 4. "Neither indifference nor not-indifference." One hardly knows what to make of this translation of the technical Buddhist term: probably no meaning is really illuminating to one who has not experienced that state of mind. To me it seems a kind of non-awareness which is somehow different from mere ignorance. Rather like one's feeling about the automatic functions of physiology, perhaps: and acceptance so complete that, although the mind contains the idea, it is not stirred thereby into consciousness. These speculations are, perhaps, idle, and so distracting, for you in your present path. Was it worth while to make this analogy? I think so, vague and unscientific as it must have seemed to you, as reminding you of the way in which unlike ideas acquire close kinship as one advance on the path.

Enough of all this! I could not bear to hear you exclaim:

"*Di magni! Salaputtium disertum!*" as Catullus would certainly have done, had I inflicted all these dry-as-dust dromedary-dropping upon him!

Let us get on to your white rages!

Well I do know them though I call them black—no, I shall *not* quarrel about the colour.

To me they come almost every day. When I see the maid dust my mantelpiece—which I pay her to do—I want not merely to slay her in the extremity of torment; I want to abolish her, to annihilate her—and the mantelpiece too and everything on it! I can hardly keep from roaring at her to get out and never darken my door again. This is not because she is doing it badly; doing it at all is a token of the unspeakable horror of existence. The actual feeling is that she is somewhat disturbing my aura, which I had got so nice and clean and quiet after the nuisance of "getting up." I feel as if I were being pushed about in a crowd of swarming insect-citizens.

Then there is quite another kind, which is quite clearly penny-plain frustration. Something one wants to do, perhaps a trifle, and one can't. Then one looks for the obstacle, and then the enemy behind that again; maybe one gets into one of those "ladder-meditations" (as described in *Liber Aleph*,[4] quoted in *The Book of Thoth*, when discussing "The Fool" and Hashish, only the wrong way up!)

which end by the conception of the Universe itself as the very climax, asymptote, quintessence of frustration—the perfect symbol of all uselessness. This is, of course, the absolute contradictory of Thelema; but it is the sorites on which both Hindu and Buddhist conclusions are based.

This kind of rage is, accordingly, most noxious; it is direct attack from within upon the virgin citadel of Self. It is high treason to existence. Its results are immediately harmful; it begets depression, melancholy, despair. In fact, one does wisely to take the bear by the ring in his snout; accept his conclusions, agree that it is all abject and futile and silly—and turn the hose-pipe of the Trance of Laughter on him until he dances to your pleasure.

But—is this any answer to your problem? It disturbs me little that you should try to palm off "Peace" upon my sentries as the password. Too often peace is merely the result of war-weariness, and the very negation of victory. It is (or may be) the formula of sloth and the gateway of stagnation.

Life is to be a continuous vibration of ecstasy; and so it is for the Adept, whenever his work allows him time to consider the matter, consciously; and even when his work pre-empts his attention, is an eternal fountain of pure joy springing, a crystal fragrance of reverberation light from the most inmost caverns of the Heart. It secretly informs one's dullest thought with sparkling wine, radiant in the Aethyr—see well! the least excuse, since it is always there, and champing at its bit, to turn the dreary cart-horse drudge into proud Pegasus himself!

This is where I want to have you, with us who are come thus far, in a state utterly detached from the Ego, so that you appear the plain Jane Wolfe[5] "doing your duty in that state of life to which it has pleased God to call you" and consequently unremarked—like a Rosicrucian, "wearing the habit of the country in which you are travelling"—but trembling with interior illumination, so that the first relaxation of the constant conscious burden of Jane Wolfe, Soror Estai is automatically released, a pillar of Creative Light.

"I am Thou, and the Pillar is 'stablished in the Void."

(Liber LXV, as you know, is full of these explosions).

No: I am not at all sure that all this is the answer that you need about white rages. Yet it is certainly contained herein, or, at the least, implied. (Of course, *it is all here*, my love, and may God bless you, whereever you are.)

Try another aspect.

We tracked the cause: it was frustration. Good: then we must counter it. How? Only (in the last event) by getting the mind firmly fixed in the complete philosophy of Thelema. There is no such thing as frustration. Every step is a step on the Path. It is simply not true that you were being baulked. The height of your irritation is a direct measure of the intensity of your Energy. Again, you soon come to laugh at yourself for your impatience. Probably (you surmise) your trouble is exactly that: you are pushing too hard. Your mind runs back to AL I, 44; you realize (again!) that any result actually spoils the Truth and Beauty of the Act of Will; it is almost a burden; even an insult. Rather as if I risked my life to save yours, and you tipped me half-a- crown! Here's that *Book of Lies*_popping out its ugly mug again: "Thou has *become* the Way." This is why the Ankh or "Key of Life" is a sandal-strap, borne in the hand of every God as a mark of his Godhead: a God is one who goes. (If I remember rightly, Plato derives "Θεως" from a verb meaning "to run", and is heartily abused by scholars for so doing. But perhaps the dreary old sophist was not far wrong, for once.) What you need to do, then, is to knit all these ideas into a very close pattern; to make of them a consecrated Talisman. Then, when rage takes you, it can be thrown upon the fire to stifle it: to thrust against the Demon, to disintegrate him. The great point is to have this weapon very firmly constructed, very complete. Your rage will pass in one of those two ways, which are one: Rapture and Laughter.

I want you to go over this apparatus very carefully; to analyse the argument, to make sure that there are no loose ends, to keep it keen and polished and well-oiled, ever ready for immediate use: not only against rage, but against any hampering or depressing line of thought.

Well, let us hope that I've got it all down fairly well this time, and that you will find it work. For I confess to a touch of my Mariana-in-the-moated-Grange complex: I've been umpteen hours on this letter, and I must have killed a Cakkravarti-Rajah, or wounded the body of a Buddha, in my last incarnation, or Tahuti (hang it all! I *have* been most devoted to him all my life) would have let me have a secretary. Well, that's that: so now to turn the Flak on to your so-called "Astral Flight." *What* a Tail spin! (Here I dash my turban to the ground! Here I deliver you to Eblis, and reserve a private box for you in Jehannum! Here I melt into salt tears, and think of all the other Gurus that have had to bear it.)

Astral Flight!!!!!!!!

Excuse me if I mention it, but—no doubt the fault is mine—you seem to have failed to note any single one of all my prayerful injunctions, either in the letter or on your visit.

Perhaps you thought that I should take circles and pentagrams etc. for granted: but you give no hint of the object of your journey. (No don't quote AL I, 44 at me: it doesn't mean that. I don't expect you to answer the clerk at the booking-office "Where to, madam?" with "I don't mind in the least." Though, even in that case it is *magically* true, or should be. As in the case of the young lady who got carried on to Crewe. The unplanned adventure may have proved much more amusing.) How am I to tell whether you were seeing correctly? Suppose your chosen hexagram had been VI Sung "Contention" or XXIX Î "Nourishing"? Where would be the "vision"? You are to set out to explore a country unknown to you: How can I be sure that you have actually been there? How can you be sure yourself? You can't. You can, if you go to a place you have never heard of, and then discover later on, that it actually exists. You have got to display the congruity of your vision with the account of the country given in the Text. If you take Khien I, which is all Lingams and Dragons, and you describe it as a landscape in the Broads, I can only conclude that you did not get anywhere near it.

Then you produce a monk, and never get his name or office. Finally after you return, you get this Caballero dropping in unasked.

Alas! I fear me much this was no Astral journey at all; it reads like weak imagination tinged by desire. All you got of interest was the answer to your question: and that you should have gripped, made more precise, analysed, interpreted. Dear me, no!

Final shot: my instinct is all against the "lying in bed." These visions are intensely active: the hardest kind of work. Read *Liber CDXVIII*, 2nd Aethyr (and others) to understand the appalling physical strain, when you reach remote, well-guarded, and exalted confines of the Universe.

In every sense of the expression—SIT UP!

(I'm "sitting up" myself to finish this letter. Here goes for the last lap!)

Music. Justifiable? Why not? A help to your great Work, an aspect of your Will, *nicht wahr*? Go to it!

Apollo is the God of Music, pre-eminently; but He is too all-comprehensive, all-pervading, to be much use in a Talisman except as a general background. But there are the Muses: Polymina (or Polyhymnia) seems the one you want: she inspires the sublime hymn. How to invoke her is a matter for prolonged consideration. One would hardly see how to tackle the problem at all, unless by digging out an Angel from one of the Enochian Tablets. (See *Equinox* I, 7 and 8). Perhaps there is a square ruled by Sol (or Venus), Fire, Air and Water in the Tablet of one of these, with an appropriate Character on the summit of the Pyramid. If so, all would be plain sailing.

Of course, there are other Gods, notably Pan. (I must ask you to set my Hymn to Pan to music). But I doubt if any of these are what you want. Probably the most practical plan would be to make a musical conjuration of Sol: use this as your invocation when you go on the Astral Plane: there find a suitable guide to the proper authority—and so on!

And that, dear Sister, for to-night will be exactly and precisely that!

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

1) The reader should bear in mind that traffic was primarily horses in the era in which Crowley worked out this method! – WEH

2) The “sleep of Siloam” (or 'Sialam') appears to have been a term used in certain occult fraternities to denote a controlled deliberate trance state (according to the editors of The Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor the term originates in a 19th-century British army officer's memoir of his time in India, and was taken up by P.B. Randolph and H.P. Blavatsky). An unpublished (possibly lost, or never written) official instruction of A∴A∴ supposedly deals with the matter. One ritual by Crowley which mentions “the Sleep of Siloam” survives (it was published in The Magical Link in 1999), and this does indeed have the magician lying down in the Hanged Man posture at one point in the ritual – T.S.

3) This letter may have been written in the early 40's before the blockbuster hit behind Crowley's residence while he was out. A caution regarding visualization is in order! – W.E.H.

4) Chapters 177-182.

5) Jane Wolfe (Soror Estai), Hollywood actress in the 1920s; briefly resident at the Abbey of Thelema; later a member of Agapé Lodge #2 in California. Some of the other letters in Magick Without Tears may have also been originally written to her, though most were for Ms. Anne Macky (Soror Fiat Yod) – T.S.

Chapter 64

Magical Power

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Rightly you remark that most of these letters have dealt with self-development in one form or another; now, what of the "*causa finalis*",[1] the "practical angle" some would call it. Are the outrageous quack advertisements of the swindlers with their "Great Free Book" and so on, all baseless? My dear child, then back to those letters that gave you a glimpse of the History of Magick, and those in which I told you something of the ways in which the Masters work. Oh, I see! What you want now is to learn how to apply the knowledge and power that you have gained to the execution of your True Will, to accomplishment of the Great Work.

Obviously, much must be left to your own common-sense; the one technical point on which I insist above all others is the Magical Link.

You must lay to heart *Magick* Chapter XIV (pp. 106-122) and never forget one detail. More failure comes from neglect of this than from all other causes put together. Most of the qualities that you need are inborn; all the material is to your hand; and to develop them is a natural process, equally your birthright. But the making of the Link is an intellectual, even mechanical, task; success depends on purely objective considerations.

That granted, there are perhaps a few hints. Firstly, while of course the Magical Theory supposes a kind of omnipotence, please remember that Magick *is* Science, that the Laws of Nature remain the same, however subtle may be the material with which one is working. It is, to put it brutally, a bigger miracle to destroy a fortress than an easy chair.

You know this well enough; but the corollary is that it is nearly always a mistake to try to do things entirely off one's own bat. It is much simpler to look for an existing force, in good working order, that is doing the sort of stuff that you need, and take from it, or control in it, just that bit of it that you happen to require.

You can, theoretically, walk from Cadiz to Vladivostock; but unless there be some special reason, it will save time and waste of energy to make use of a fraction of the machine-power that happens to be moving in that direction.

This is particularly true of moral and political reform. Hitler would have got exactly nowhere if he had been content to announce his evangel; he became master of Germany, and, for a time, of nearly all Europe, by playing upon existing instruments of human passion; the revenge-lust of Central Europe, the panic of the Blimps and Junkers, the discontent of the property-lacking classes, the pride and ambition of the Prussian military clique, and so on. When he had used them to the full, he callously flung them to the wolves. But make no mistake! The Magical Power behind all his actions lay in himself. He had succeeded in making himself a prophet, like Mohammed; even a symbol, like the Cross of the His magical technique was indescribably admirable; he adopted the Swastika, the Hammer of Thor, the distinctive dress, the slogan, the gestures, the greeting; he even imposed a Sacred Book upon the people. If that book had only been more mystic and incomprehensible, instead of reasonable, diffuse, and intolerably dull, he might have done better. As it was, he came within an ace of capturing England, even before he came to power in Germany; and it was American money that saved the Nazi party at the most critical moment. Cleverest move of all, he gave the world something to hate; the Communist and the Jew.

His only trouble was that he couldn't count on his fingers! I perceive that I am turning into the late Samuel Smiles; having given you an example to imitate—but don't forget your arithmetic!—let me initiate you into one of two other secrets of power!

Um—will I now? Perhaps you're hardly grown up enough. I suspect that your question contemplated not so much Power as powers: things like healing the sick, making oneself invisible, kindling a flame with- out combustibles, bewitching the neighbours' cows, spoiling your friend's honeymoon, fascinations of all kinds, levitation, lycanthropy, necromancy, all the regular stuff of the legends and the fables.

Most of these matters are discussed in *Magick*, so all I need tell you is the correct general attitude to all such thaumaturgies.

The best excuse for trying to acquire them is that one learns such a lot in the process. Otherwise—

Here is another of those Eastern stories for you! A certain Yogi thought it would be an admirable achievement to walk across the Ganges. After forty years he succeeded, and went off to his Guru to demonstrate his power, and receive his due meed of praise. It so happened that this Guru was rather like myself, at least in he matter of his Nasty Temper; and when the disciple came gaily striding back across the Sacred Stream, expecting compliments, he was met with: "Well, I think you're a perfect fool all these years, your neighbours have been going to and fro on a raft for a couple of pice!"

The moral, dear child, is that such powers are never to be considered as the main object; it ought in fact to be obvious from the start that any one's True Will must be deeper and more comprehensive than any mere technical achievement. I will go further and say that any such endeavour must be a magical mistake, like cherishing a gun or a clock or a fishing-rod for its own sake, and not for the use that one can make of it. Indeed, that remark goes to the root of the matter; for all these powers, if we understand them properly, are natural by-products of one's real Great Work. My own experience was very convincing on this point; for one power after another came popping up when it was least wanted, and I saw at once that they represented so many leaks in my boat. They argued imperfect insulation.

And really they are quite a bit of a nuisance. Their possession is so flattering, and their seduction so subtle. One understands at once why all the first-class Teachers insist so sternly that the Siddhi (or Iddhi) must be rejected firmly by the Aspirant, if he is not to be sidetracked and ultimately lost.

Nevertheless, "even the evil germs of Matter may alike become useful and good" as Zoroaster reminds us.[2)] For one thing, their possession is indubitably a sheet-anchor, at the mercy of the hurricane of Doubt— doubt as to whether the whole business is not Tommy-rot!

Such moments are frequent, even when one has advanced to a stage when Doubt would seem impossible; until you get there, you can have no idea how bad it is!

Then, again, when these powers have sprung naturally and spontaneously from the exercise of one's proper faculties in the Great Work, they ought to be a little more than leaks. You ought to be able to organize and control them in such wise that they are of actual assistance to you in taking the Next Step. After all, what moral or magical difference is there between the power of digesting one's food, and that of transforming oneself into a hawk?

That being the case, let me transform myself into a butterfly, and flit on to other honeysuckles!

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

1) Lat., “final cause.” Aristotelean and medieval philosophy recognised four kinds of “cause” (αιτια): material, formal, efficient and final; the “final cause” is the “for the sake of which,” the purpose an intelligent agent has when making or doing something, the end or goal for which a thing exists, and so on – T.S.

2) Chaldæan Oracles, fragment 191 in the Westcott edition, where it is rendered “Nature persuadeth us that there are pure Dæmons, and that evil germs of Matter may alike become useful and good.” A modern translation (by Johnston in Hekate Soteira) runs “Physis persuades us to believe that the daemones are pure, and that the products of evil matter are propitious and good.” Johnston (also Lewy in Chaldæan Oracles and Theurgy) interprets this verse in a manner almost diametrically opposed to that of Crowley, arguing that the Oracles have a basically hylophobic perspective and this fragment is rather a warning about the delusiveness of “nature” (φυσις) – T.S.

Chapter 65

Man

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

In previous letters I hope I have been able to give you some idea of the initiated conception of the Macrocosm, and also to have made it clear to you why we must all use a symbolic language, and the necessity of constructing a special alphabet as the basis of our conversations about Magick.

I have also furnished you with charts of this alphabet. It would of course have been too clumsy and cumbersome to put all the different systems of symbol on to the Tree of Life. That Tree is indeed the basis of all our classification, and I hope by now you have got fairly familiar with the process of sticking everything that turns up on its correct branch of the Tree.

In your last letter you thank me for having made clear to you the initiated teaching with regard to the Universe; and you now very rightly enquire "this being so, where do we come in?" You hold up to me one of the oldest axioms of the Qabalah. "That which is above is like that which is below," and you ask me for details. What, you enquire, is the constitution of Man? With what parts of the Great System is the Little System to coincide?

Perhaps I could hardly do better than call your attention to the description given in my essay on Man in my small book Little Essays Toward Truth.

In some respects indeed this description is not as clear as I could have wished. The fact is that this Essay was written chiefly for the benefit of those people who were already more or less familiar with the Tree of Life and its correspondences. But I do not know even to-day, twenty years later, and writing as I am to you who admittedly had no previous knowledge of any of these subjects, how to set forth the facts in more elementary terms. I warned you in the beginning that there was an essential difficulty in these studies which is not to be by-passed or dodged in any way whatever.

But, after all, it is the same difficulty which every child finds when he begins any study of any kind. In Latin, for instance, he is told that *mensa* means a table, that it belongs to the first declension and is feminine. There is no why about any of this; no explanation is possible; the child has to pick up the elements of the language one by one, taking what he is taught on trust. And it is only after accumulating a vast collection of unintelligible details that the jig-saw pieces fall into place, and he finds himself able to construe the classical texts.

You must be patient; you must go over and over again everything that is presented to you, and by obeying you will not only come to a clear comprehension of the subject, but find yourself automatically thinking in the language which you have been at such pains to acquire.

I feel then that I must leave you with these descriptions and these charts until painfully at first, but at the end with intense pride and gratification, you find yourself spontaneously grasping the more complex combinations of these letters and words which are the anatomy of the body of our Learning.

And do not forget the old and well-worn saw: "Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian Spring!—A little learning is a dangerous thing."

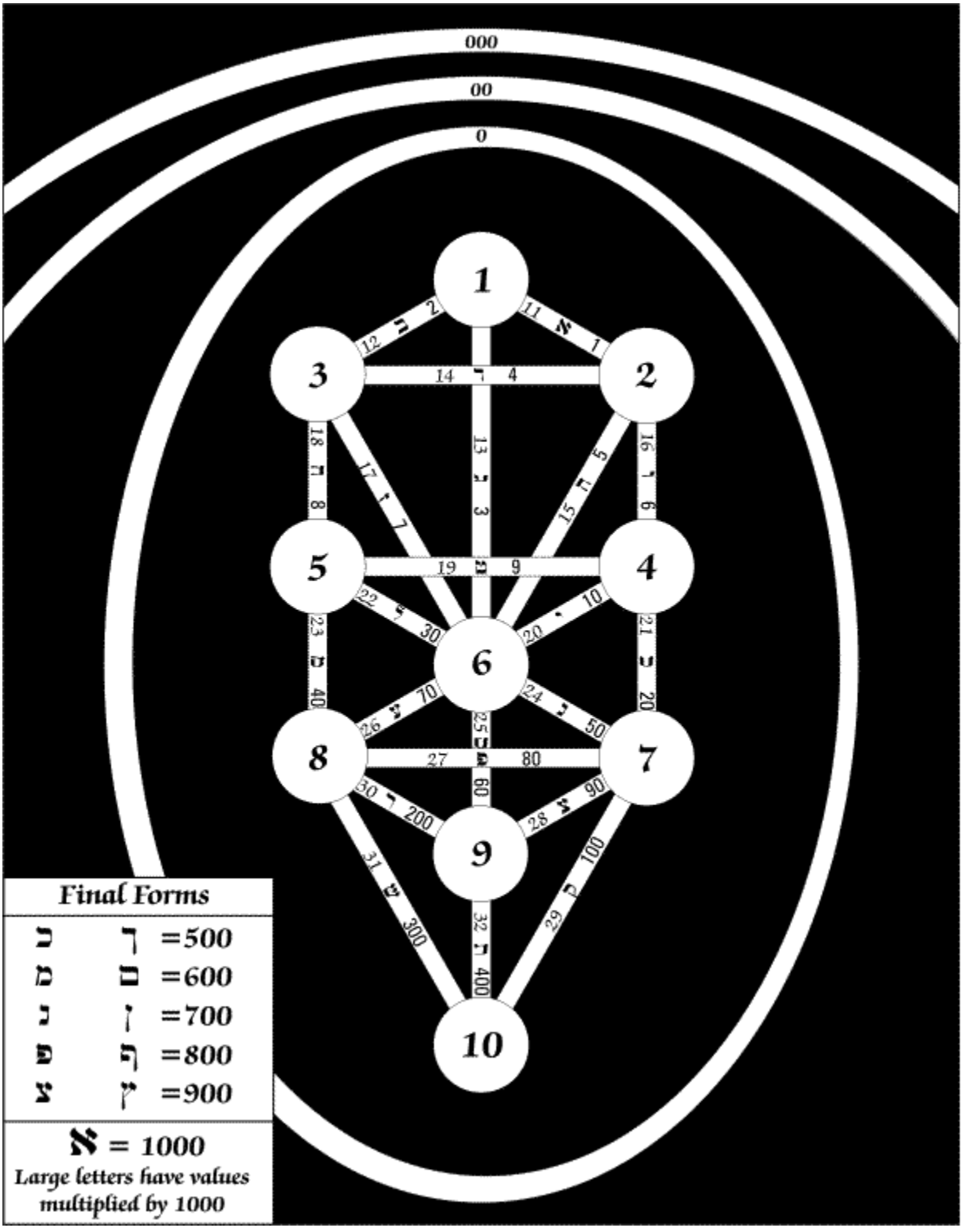
Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

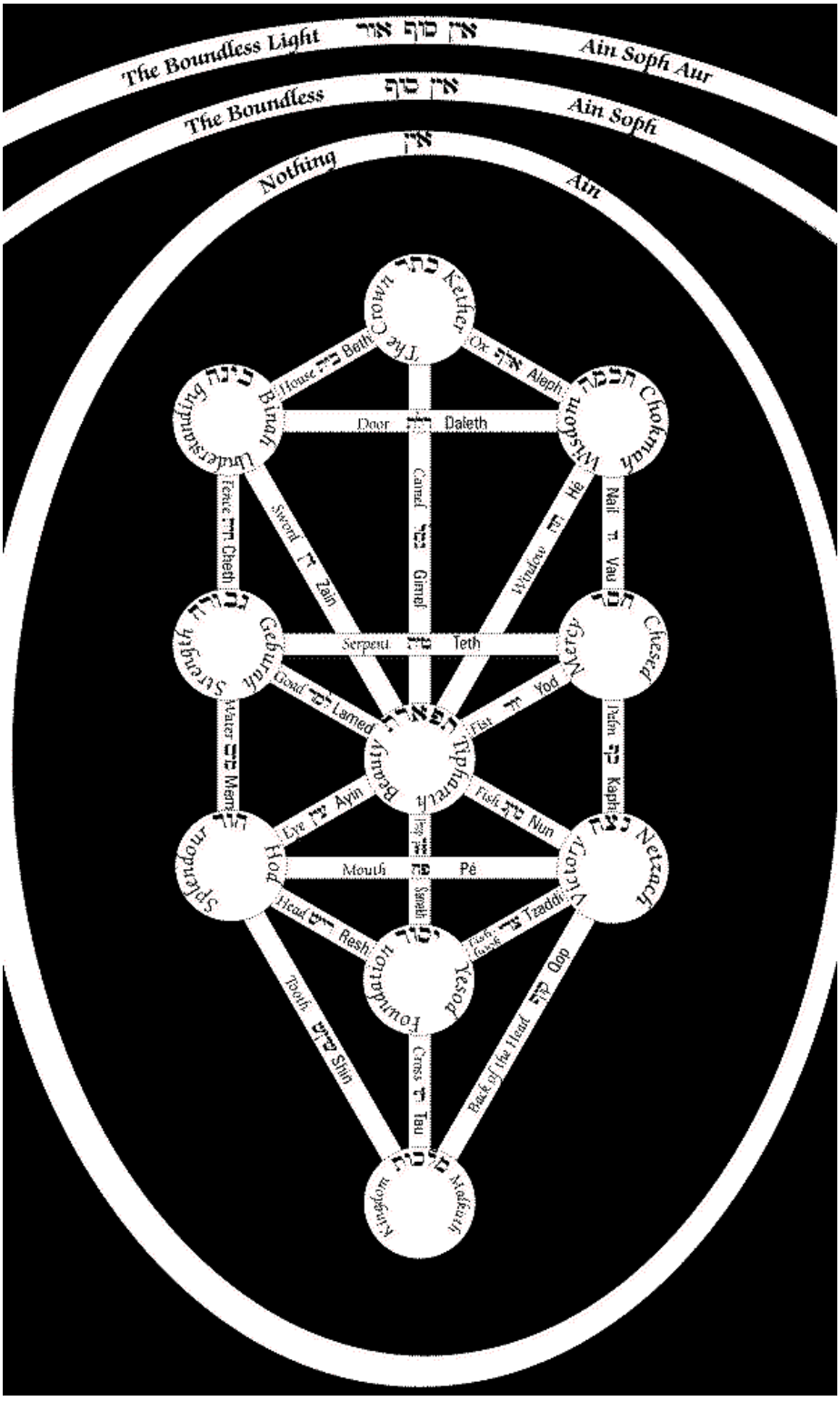
Note: In the original this letter was accompanied by four Tree of Life diagrams, three of which were copies of those which appeared in The Book of Thoth. They have been redrawn and in some cases re-arranged in an attempt to make the information readable on a computer screen.

THE KEY SCALE:



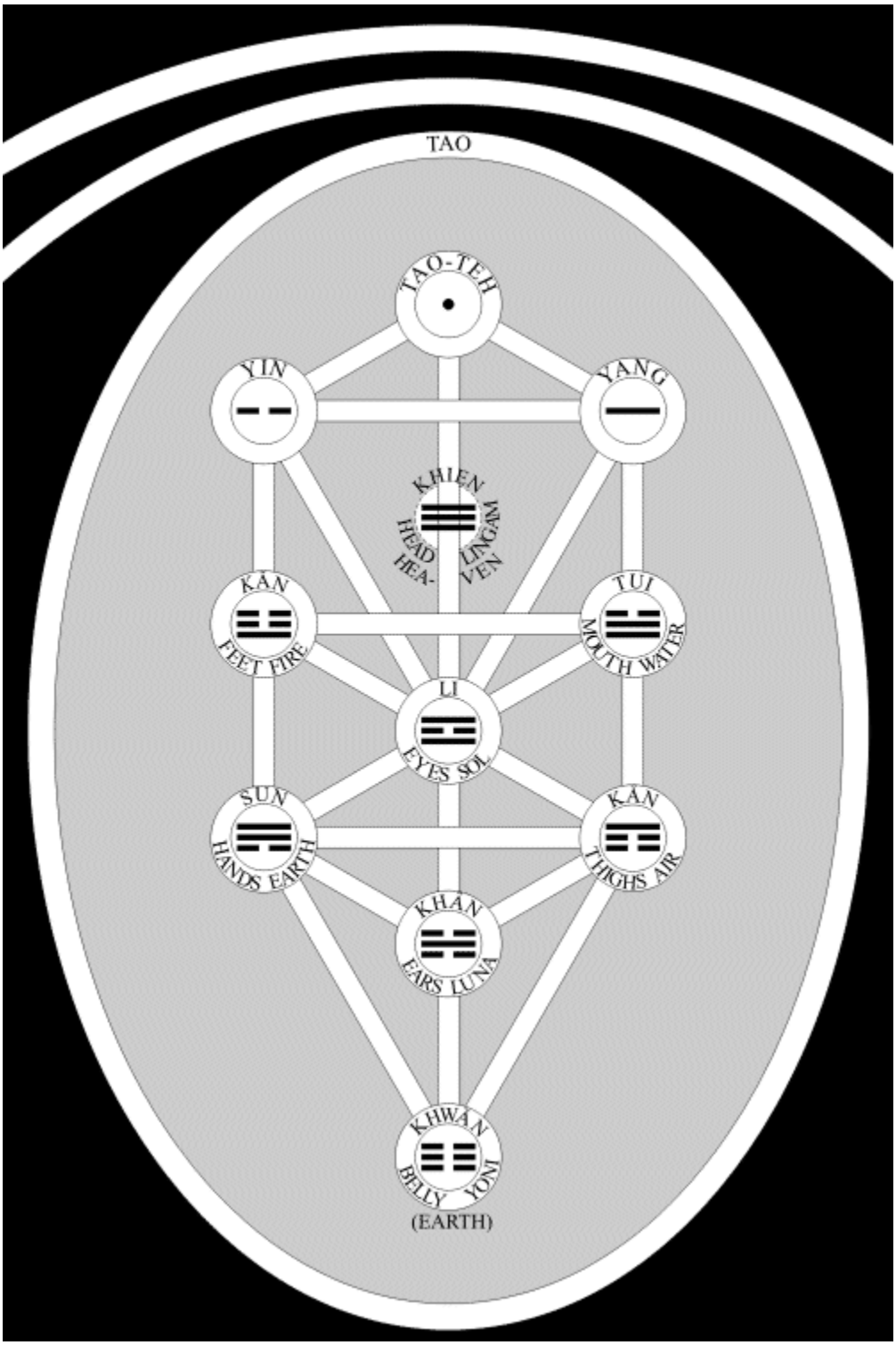
This figure shows the Sephiroth with their numbers only, and the Paths with Hebrew letters corresponding. The first number on each Path is its "key scale" number, the second is the numerical value of the letter.

HEBREW NAMES OF NUMBERS AND LETTERS:



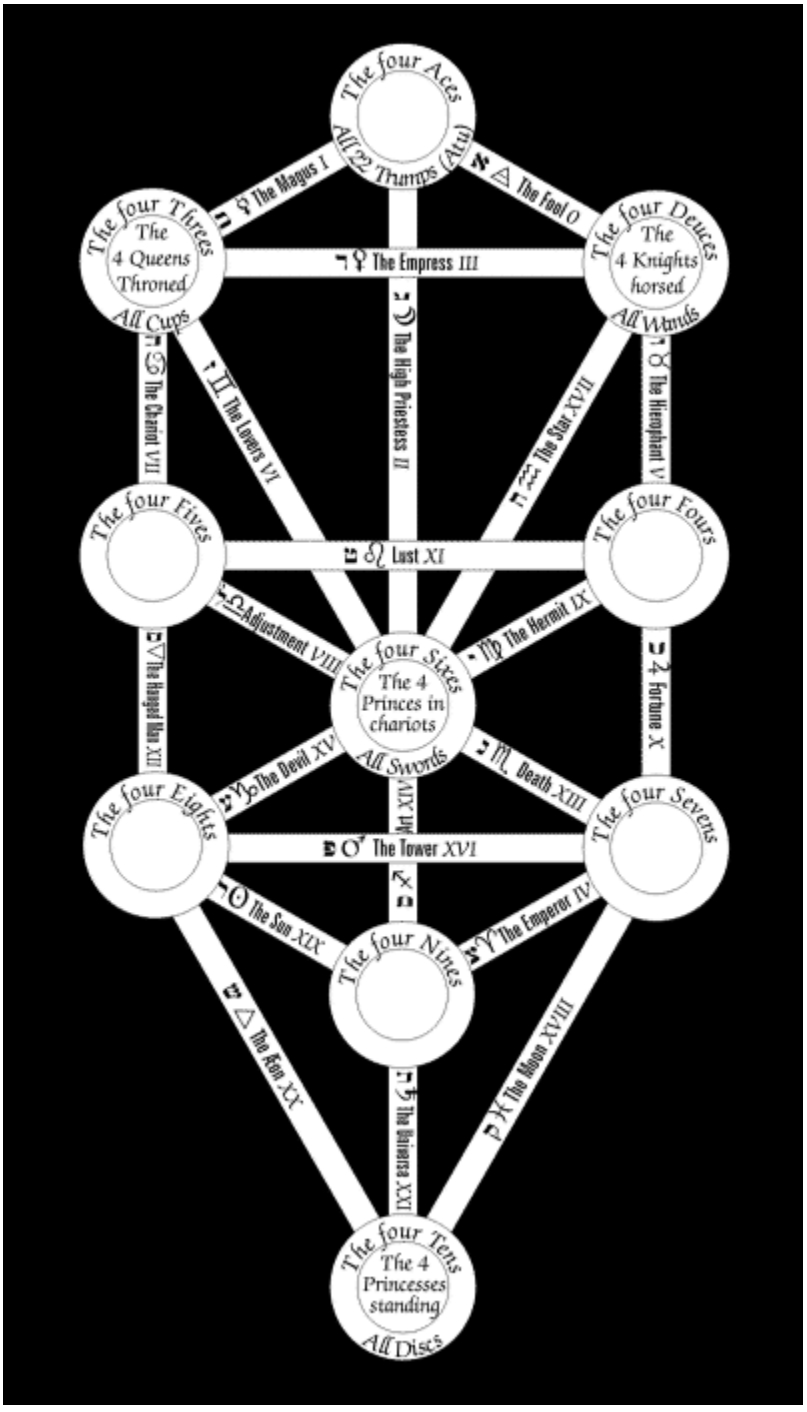
This figure shows the name of the Sephiroth and the letters of the Paths in English, Hebrew and transliterated Hebrew. In the original edition the information on this and the above were combined into a single diagram which thus became unreadable in places.

THE CHINESE COSMOS:



This shows Crowley's later attributions of the Taoist principles including the eight trigrams of the Yi King to the Sephiroth. These differ somewhat from those in 777 col. XLVI and Appendix I.

GENERAL ATTRIBUTION OF THE TAROT:

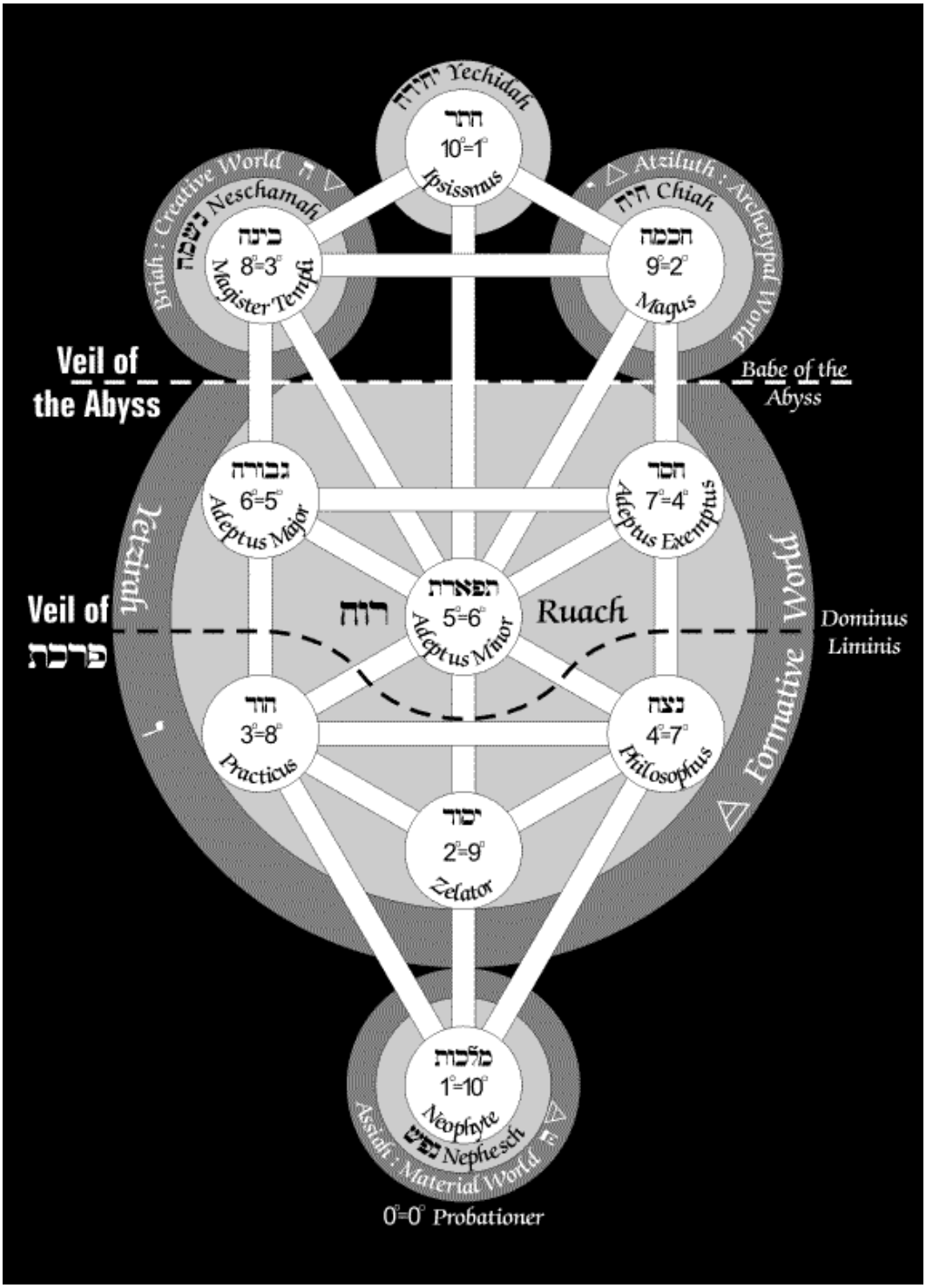


Names of Tarot Trumps, suits and court cards have been conformed to those employed in *The Book of Thoth*.

- ATU VIII, “Adjustment,” was traditionally called Justice.
- ATU IX, “The Hermit,” is sometimes known as Prudence.
- ATU X, “Fortune” was traditionally called The Wheel of Fortune.

- ATU XI, “Lust,” was traditionally called Strength or Fortitude.
- ATU XIV, “Art,” was traditionally called Temperence.
- ATU XVI, “The Tower,” has also been called The Blasted Tower or The House of God.
- ATU XX, “The Æon,” was traditionally called The Angel or The Last Judgement.
- ATU XXI, “The Universe,” is also known as The World.
- The suit of Disks is also known as Coins or Pentacles.
- The Knight court cards (mounted male figures) are sometimes known as Kings.
- The Prince court cards (male figures in chariots) are sometimes known as Emperors or Kings (confusing, eh?).
- The Princess court cards are sometimes known as Empresses or Pages.

THE CONSTITUTION OF MAN:



The figure on which this is based was probably a copy of the diagram accompanying the first edition of Little Essays Toward Truth and shows the A∴A∴ grades on the Tree of Life along with the Four Worlds and the Qabalistic Soul.

(1) - (1) This duplicates the G∴D∴ confusion of the parts of the soul with the four Qabalistic worlds—as started by Mathers through misinterpretation of traditional Qabalah. The error of omitting the sixth traditional part, the Guff, is also perpetuated here. No big issue, but I'm picky – WEH. The confusion between the Qabalistic worlds and parts of the soul first appears to have been perpetrated by Mathers in his

introduction to Kabbalah Unveiled (s.72 and subjoined plate). The G'uph, identified with the physical body, is mentioned in the account of the Qabalistic Soul in Zalewski, Kabbalah of the Golden Dawn – T.S.

Chapter 66

Vampires

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

So you want me to tell you all about Vampires? Vampire yourself!

I ask you, how does this come within the scope of your enquiries? Is this information essential to your Accomplishment of the Great Work? As the Government might say "Is your journey really necessary?"

So musing, I rang you up for details. Vampires, you say, might be a temptation to yourself, or they might sap your energy. Very good. I will tell you the little I know.

Listen to Eliphas Lévi! He warns us against a type of person, fearless and cold-blooded, who seems to have the power to cast a sudden chill, merely by entering the room, upon the gayest party ever assembled.

Tête-à-tête, they shake one's resolution, kill one's enthusiasm, devitalize one's faith and courage.

Yes, we all know such people. Mercury, by the way, is the planet responsible. I have examined a considerable number of nativities, both of murderers and of people murdered; in both cases it was not a "malefic" that did the dirty work, but poor tiny innocent silvery-shining Mercury!

"Fie for same, you naughty planet!
You're the blighter that began it."

is it not John Henry Newman that sang of Lucifer? I doubt it.

You, however, are thinking more of the vampire of romance. Bram Stoker's *Dracula* and its kindred. This is a splendidly well-documented book, by the way; he got his "facts" and their legal and magical surroundings, perfectly correct.

It is easy enough to laugh at vampires if you live in Upper Tooting, or Surbiton, or one of those places where no self-respecting Vampire would wish to be seen. But in a lonely mountain village in Bulgaria you might feel differently about it! You should remember, incidentally, that the evidence for vampires is as strong as for pretty well anything else in the world. There are innumerable records extant of legal proceedings wherein the most sober, responsible, worthy and well-respected citizens, including the advocates and judges, investigated case after case with the utmost minuteness, with the most distinguished surgeons and anatomists to swear to the clinical details.

Endless is the list of well-attested cases of bodies dug up after months of burial which have been found not merely flourishing with all the lines of life, but gorged with fresh blood.

I cannot help feeling that all the superior-person explanations—which explain nothing—about collective hysteria and superstition and wish fulfillment and the rest of the current tomfool jargon, are just about as hard to believe as the original straight forward stories.

The man who shook his head on being shown a giraffe, and said “I don't believe it,” is quite on a par with he pontifical wiseacres of Wimpole Street.

It is egomaniac vanity that prompts disbelief in phenomena merely because they lie outside the infinitesimally minute pilule of one's own personal experience.

When I crossed the Burma-China frontier for the first time, who should I meet but our Consul at Tengyueh, the admirable Litton, who had by sheer brains and personality turned the whole province of Yunnan into his own Vice-royalty? We lunched together on the grass, and I hastened to dig into the goldmine of his knowledge of the country. About the third or fourth thing he said to me was this: “Remember! whatever anyone tells you about China is true.” No words have ever impressed me more deeply; they sank right in and were illuminated by daily experience until they had justified themselves a thousand times over.

That goes for Vampires!

Oh yeah! (you vulgarly interpolate) and how does it go with the Master's unfathomably sage discourse on Doubt.

Sister, you're loopy! Sister, if I may doubt all the people who have been to Africa or the Zoo and seen that giraffe, why must I cling with simple childlike trust to the

people that say they've been all over Hell and parts of Kansas, and haven't seen one, and *therefore* such things cannot possibly be? Of the two dogmatic assertions, I should unquestionably prefer the positive statement to the negative.

In 1916, I was the first trained scientific observer to record the appearance commonly called "St Elmo's fire" indiscreetly revealing this fact in a letter to the *New York Times*. I was pestered for the next six months and more by professors of physics (and the rest) from all over the U.S.A. The Existence of the phenomenon had been doubted until then because of certain theoretical difficulties. That, sister, is the point. If a statement is hard to reconcile with the whole body of evidence on the laws of the subject, it is rightly received with suspicion.

A moment with great Huxley, and his illustration of the centaur in Piccadilly, reported to him (he humorously hypothesizes) by Professor Owen. What occasions Huxley's doubt, and inspires the questions by means of which he seeks to confirm or to discredit it? Just this, no more: here is the head and torso of a man fitted to the shoulders of a horse; how are the mechanical adjustments effected?

In the same strain, he pointed out that for an angel to have practicable wings as in Mediaeval pictures, the breast-bone would have to stand out some five feet in front of the body. (The poor fellow, of course, was densely ignorant of the mechanics of the Astral Plane. I am, for once, "on the side of the angels.")[1)]

Am I digressing again? No, not really; I am just putting forward a case for keeping an open mind on the subject of Vampires, even of the Clan Dracula.

But certainly there is little or no evidence of the existence of that species in England.

How then is the subject in any way important to you? Thus, that there are actually people running about all over the place, who actually possess, and exercise, faculties similar to those mentioned by Lévi, but in much greater intensity, even of a kind far more formidable, and directed by malignant will.

There is a mighty volume of theory and practice concerning this and cognate subjects which will be open to you when—and if—you attain the VIII° of O.T.O. and become Pontiff and Epopt of the Illuminati. Further, when you enter the Sanctuary of the Gnosis—oh boy! Or, more accurately, oh girl!

Not that the O.T.O. is a Young Ladies' and Gentlemen's Seminary for Tuition in Vampirism,[2] with a Chair (hardly suitable) for Werwolves, and Beds of Justice—that sounds more apt—for Incubi and Succubi;[3] far from it! But the forces of Nature employed in these presumably abominable practices are similar or identical.

The doctrine of "Vital Force" has been so long and so completely exploded that I hardly need to tell you that in some still undiscovered (or, rather, unpublished) and unmeasured form it is certainly a fact. Haven't I told you one time how we nearly starved on Iztaccihuatl with dozens of tinned foods all round us, they being ancient; of how one can get drunk on half a dozen oysters; of how the best meat I have ever eaten is half-raw Himalyan sheep, cut up and thrown on the glowing ashes before rigor mortis had set in?[4] There *is* a difference between living and dead protoplasm, whether the chemist and his fellow twilight-gropers admit it or no. I do not blame the ignorance of these fumblers with frost-bitten fingers; b ut they make themselves conspicuously assinine when they flaunt that ignorance as the Quintessence of Knowledge; Boeotian bombast!

There *are* forms of Energy, their Order too subtle to have been properly measured hitherto, which underlie and can, within certain limits, direct the gross chemical and physical changes of the body. To deny this is to be flung headlong into the arms of Animal Automatism. Huxley's arguments for this theory are precisely like those of Bishop Berkeley: unanswerable, but unconvincing. This letter is *not*, to every comma, the ineluctable, apodeictic, automatic, reaction to the stimulus of your question; and no one can persuade me that it is. Of course that unpersuadability is equally a factor in the equation; it is quite useless to try to "answer back." Only, it's silly!

(And, in the meanwhile, the mathematical physicists are knocking the bottom clean out of their ship by shewing that causality itself is little more than a maniac's raving!)

So then, we may—at least!—get busy. It is easy enough to bore one's neighbour—look how I bore you! But that is usually an unintentional business. Is it possible to intensify the devitalizing process, so as to weaken the victim physically, perhaps even almost to the point of death? Yes.

How? The traditional method is to get possession of some object or substance intimately connected with the victim. On this you work magically so as to absorb its virtue. It is best if it was as recently as possible part of his living tissue; for instance, a nail-paring, a hair plucked from his head. Something still alive or

nearly so, and still part of the complex of energies that he included in his conception of his body.

Best of all are fluids and secretions, notably blood and one other of supreme importance to the continuity of life. When you can get these still alive to their function, it is best of all. That is why it is not so highly recommended to tear out and devour the heart and liver of your next-door neighbour; you have gone far to destroy just that which is of most importance to you to keep alive.

Doubtless you will reply with some apparent justice, indeed most plausible is such ratiocination, that by taking into your own body, and so preserving the life of, his heart and liver, the whole of his "vital energies" will desert the sinking ship of the physical tissue, and rush to the lifeboat provided by the vampire. Never forget that you confer an inestimable benefit upon the victim by absorbing his lower point of Energy into your higher. Read your *Magick*, Chapter XII![5)]

You say this strongly, my dear Sister in the Lord; your thesis is impeccably stated, your arguments are cogent, plangent, not to be repeated. But—this I pout to you most solemnly—*what experimental evidence do you adduce*? How many hearts, how many livers, have been your spiritual sustenance? Have you excluded every source of error? Have you—here, you know the routine; write it all down and send it along to be vetted!

Be that as it may, I once knew a lady of some seventy summers. She came of a noble Polish family; she was short, sturdy, rather plump but singularly agile; good-looking in a brutal sort of way. But—her eyes! For fifty years she had lived nearly all the year round in her chateau in Touraine. She had plenty of money, and had always surrounded her- self with a dozen or more boys and young men. (By young I mean up to forty). She not only looked twenty-five but she lived twenty-five. It was a genuine, natural, spontaneous twenty-five, not a gallant effort. She would dance the night through and go a long walk in the morning. You may apply to her for details of the treatment; I dare say she is still about, thought I did hear that she moved to South America when she saw 1914 coming. In any case, you have had some fairly plain hints so I can say in all simplicity, "Go thou and do likewise!"

I think my old friend Claude Farrère had more than an inkling of these matters; the idea of using young cellular tissue to fortify the old is plainly stated in *La maison des hommes vivants*; but as to the method of transmission his water was drawn form Wells (H.G.)

After that—you will agree that I have written enough.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

1) For all that, they move without flapping them. As Swinburne says:

"Swift without feet, and flying without wings." (The quote is from Atalanta in Calydon, chorus "Who hath given man speech?" – T.S.)

2) See De Arte Magica; the chapter on Vampirism is titled "Of a certain other method of Magick not included in the instruction of O.T.O." – T.S.

3) See Liber XXIV, chapter on Incubi and Succubi – T.S.

4) See Crowley's essay "On Food," printed in the Teitan Press edition of Amrita – T.S.

5) … and note that the "male child" (p.95) equals the Serpent.

Chapter 67

Faith

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Dear me! dear me! this is very unexpected. I wrote you a long while ago about doubt, and now I suppose the seed fell in fertile ground! My chaste remarks have prompted a new question "arising out of the previous answer, Sir."

You point out quite correctly that the doubt of which I wrote in passages of such burning eloquence is after all what used to be called "philosophic" doubt; and by "philosophic" people apparently meant something rather like "Pickwickians."

Not the genuine McCoy, determining action, but—well, rather like scoring points in an intellectual game.

Now then (*air connu*) what *is* Faith? There are two kinds; and they are almost exact opposites. (N.B. The word is allied to Bide: there's some idea of endurance (or perhaps repose) in it. Cf Peter!?!?!?) Then the third kind, which is moral, not intellectual; as in "good faith," *bona fide*, yours faithfully; and this is probably the hallmarked sense, for it implies just that endurance which goes with bide, and is not dependent in any way upon reason or conviction. This then I may dismiss as impertinent to the question in your letter, and stick to the other two.

Faith in its Meaning Number One was perfectly well defined by the schoolboy: "the faculty of believing that which we know to be untrue." It is at least the acceptance of any statement as true without criticism, examination, verification, or any other method of test. Faith of this sort is evidently the main symptom of the moron, the half-wit, the village idiot. It is this kind of faith upon the possession and exercise of which religious persons always insist as the first condition of salvation.

Here is my own lamentable foresight on the subject!

The Convert

(A Hundred Years Hence)[1)]

There met one eve in a sylan glade
A horrible Man and a beautiful maid.
“Where are you going, so meek and holy?”
“I'm going to temple to worship Crowley.”
“Crowley is God, then? How did you know?”
“Why, it's Captain Fuller that told us so.”
“And how do you know that Fuller was right?”
“I'm afraid you're a wicked man; Good-night.”

While this sort of thing is styled success
I shall not count failure bitterness.

Sometimes, note well! they are even frank about it, and say plainly that there would be no merit in it if there were any reasonable basis for it! This position is at the worst both honest and intelligible; the only trouble is that there is no possible means of deciding which to two conflicting statements to accept.

In faith of this kind there are of course in practice delicately shaded degrees; these depend mostly upon the authority of the speaker and your relations with, and opinion of, him. In practice, moreover, faith is usually tinged—should I say clouded?—by questions of probability. I see no need to weary you with examples of varying degrees; it is enough to dismiss the subject with the remark that faith is not true faith if any considerations of any kind sully its virgin nullity.

To prop faith is to destroy it: I am reminded of Mr. Harry Price's young lady of Brocken fame, who was so timorously careful of her virginity that she never felt it safe unless she had a man in bed with her.

What is the other kind of faith? Like its hostile twin, it must have no truck with reason, at least no conscious truck, or it ceases to possess a moral meaning. It is that confidence[2)] in oneself which assures one that the long shot at the tiger will fly true to the mark, that the tricky putt will go down, that the man one never beat before will go down this time; also its horrid contrary, the moral certainty that something will go wrong, even with the easiest problems, with one hundred to one in one's favour.

I think the official answer is that one's certainty is in reality based upon subconscious calculation, so that faith has nothing whatever to do with it. If there is any answer to this, I don't know it.

After all, that is neither here nor there; there is but one material issue: how to acquire that kind of faith. Suppose we hunt it up in that precious *Book of Lies*! Any luck? Sure, kiddums, here we are!

Steeped Horsehair

Mind is a disease of semen.

All that a man is or may be is hidden therein

Bodily functions are parts of the machine; silent, unless in dis-ease.

But mind, never at ease, creaketh "I."

This I persisteth not, posteth not through generations, changeth momently, finally is dead.

Therefore is man only himself when lost to himself in The Charioting.

Nothing in that to contradict the official view, is there? Nothing in biology either.

Or in Blake:

"If the Sun and Moon should doubt
They'd immediately go out."

Or in that other chapter of the *Book of Lies*:

The Mountaineer

Consciousness is a symptom of disease.

All that moves well moves without will.

All skilfullness, all strain, all intention is contrary to ease.

Practise a thousand times, and it becomes difficult; a thousand, thousand, and it becomes easy; a thousand, thousand times a thousand thousand, and it is no longer Thou that doeth it, but It that doeth itself through thee. Not until then is that which is done well done.

Thus spoke FRATER PERDURABO as he leapt from rock to rock of the moraine without ever casting his eyes upon the ground.

Or in The Book of the Law. You know the passage well enough.

Conclusion: this discussion has for ever abolished the use of the word faith to imply conscious belief of any sort.

At least, if there should ever be an element of awareness, it is of the nature of a sudden leap into daylight of the quintessence of a mass of subconsciously selected and ordered experience.

Then what, if you please, did Paul mean when he wrote “Faith is the substance of things hoped-for, the evidence of things unseen.” Oh, spot the Lady!

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours etc.

P.S. Don't take any wooden money.

P.P.S. I have a marvelous proposition for you; I wouldn't let in anyone on it but my very best friend: there's a man in San Luis Potosi in a mine there; he stole about $20,000 worth of gold dust and now he's afraid to get rid of it, but he knows I'm safe and knows how to handle it and I've been his very best friend for twenty years, and he's as straight as a die, and I know he'd let us have it for $10,000 and I've only got $4,000—and that is where *you* come in!

1) Originally published in The Winged Beetle (1910).

2) “Confidence” = cum, with; fidere, to trust = to trust fully. This confidence of which I write is usually a sort of “hunch”.

Chapter 68

The God-Letters

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Maybe it was Devanagri that began it! This “sacred” character, used rightly for Sanskrit alone, is supposed (so Allan Bennett told me) to be constructed on—can one call them ideographic?—principles. The upright line is the soft palate; the horizontal the hard; and the line between them shows the position of the tongue when one pronounces the letter. He demonstrated this most elegantly for the letter T (ट ['ta' in Sanskrit]); but I was never able to follow this up with most of the other fifty- five (isn't it?) letters.

However, it did start me thinking (why?) about the possibility of a direct relation between the sound of a letter and its meaning in some primitive manner of speech.

So I used to alarm my fellow-citizens, usually passengers on a liner, by spending most of my time repeating some unhappy letter over and over, while I looked into my mind to see if the sound suggested any particular idea. (It was rather fun, you know; but it was most certainly one of the most delicate, subtle, and difficult experiments that I have ever undertaken.)

Bound to flop, obviously, from the word “gun”, if only because the same-sounding word in different languages—sometimes even in the same!—has often not merely diverse, but diametrically opposed meanings. Think of Bog, or Bug, the Russian word for God (I do think “Bogey” comes from this, though!); think of the dam of a stream, and of a young thing, and damn. Think of all the different kinds of box and cock and rock. (G. K. Chesterton must have made tens of thousands of pounds out of it!) Think of “let”, meaning both to prevent and to allow. Think of “check” to a chess-player, a banker, a draper, a waitress, a fox-hunter and a Slovak!

The importance of all this: I'm sure I've told you how Thoth, God of all Magick, the Wisdom and the Word, is usually shown with style and papyrus, as inventor of

writing, which is the real Magical Art. Hence "grimoire" is nothing but grammar; to cast a "spell" explains itself; and the Angel (e.g. of a Church, see Revelations I, II) was merely the Secretary.[1)]

Never mind! I was thinking of language in its (supposed) primal state, when grunts and groans and moans and yells and squeaks and the like were the nearest anybody ever got to:

"Sweet articulate words
Sweetly divided apart."

And yet I persisted. I wanted to go right back, before letters were put together to make words at all. This is, I believe, almost wholly original work, though I'm not sure that Fabre d'Olivet didn't skate round the edges.

I put to myself this question: when I pronounce the letter so-and-so, what thought or class of thought tends to arise in my mind? (If you practise this in public, people may wonder!)

With the vowels, one does seem to find a natural correspondence. (I wrote a ballet "The Blind Prophet" on these lines, long before it struck me to investigate on scientific lines). The Hindus knew this with their A-U-M: A is the open breath, U the controlled force, M no breath at all. (See *Magick*, pp. 45-49). To me I is a shrill feminine sound, as O is the roar of the male. U is pursed, E hardly significant.

As to Magick, the Gnostics were *chili con carne* plus *molten platinum* plus a few girls I have known on the vowels. Their incantations con- sist almost entirely of combinations of these.[2)] Seven at a time is very frequent; in fact it seems sometimes as if their theurgy depended on variations of these combinations. Their theology, too. Never mind that just now!

But the consonants? That is a harder nut to crack.

Students of language have been accustomed to group the consonants exactly as we now happen to require. Here, in brief, is the list:

Dentals, Labials, Gutturals.

Various modifications extend them to fifty-nine and there are twenty- seven vowels. I shall naturally concern myself only with those that matter to the subject: in practice, the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew Alphabet will serve for this

preliminary study, especially as in that case, we have already the attributions. I will begin by classing them.[3)]

Gutturals

1. G. Luna.
2. Ch. Cancer, house of Luna; Jupiter here exalted.
3. K. Jupiter.
4. Q. Pisces, house of Jupiter. Atu XVII "The Moon."

You will note that either Jupiter or Luna occurs in every case; in two, doubly. Guttur, moreover, is the Latin word for throat. Both planets emphasize the soft open expansive aspects of Nature; they both refer accordingly to the feminine throat, the tube either of present or of future Life. (Jupiter, when in Sagittarius, has an aggressive, masterful, male side; but his letter when there is Samekh.) Now pronounce these letters; observe the motions of opening and expulsion of the breath. Well, then, you will no longer wonder at that list we had in another letter of the words Cwm, coombe, quean, queen, and so on; also (?) quill, queer, quaintest, curious, (?) quick, (?) quince: especially with the U vowel, which sounds prehensile, ready to suck. Kupris (or Ctytto) the Greek or Syrian Aphrodite-Venus, is the outstanding example in Theogony.

But, you ask, what has all this to do with the Gods? Patience, child; this will develop as we proceed. Let us look at the dentals. These, for the profane scholar, include the "sibilants," and "liquids."

Dentals:

1. D. Venus.
2. Z. Gemini, house of Mercury.
3. T. Leo, house of Sol.
4. L. Libra, house of Venus; Saturn here exalted.
5. M. Water.
6. N. Scorpio, house of Mars.

7. S. Sagittarius, house of Jupiter.

8. R. Sol.

9. Sh. Fire.

10. Th. Saturn; the Earth.

Here, we see at one glance, there is no such simple obvious relationship, as in the previous list. Nor indeed is there, to *my* ear, any close connection in the sounds.

Better luck, perhaps, with the last lot.

Labials 1. B. Mercury.

2. V. (or $F^{4)}$) Taurus. House of Venus; Luna exalted therein.

3. P. Mars.

Not a bit of it; almost worse than before. Here, then, I say it, weeping, with agonized reluctance, the Holy Qabalah has let us down with a bump! (It did look, too, didn't it, as if it was all going to go so miraculously well!)

All is not lost—not even honour! Suppose you reflect that (after all) Hebrew is a late language, invented; far, far removed from the primitive grunts and groans (with their corresponding motions) that we set out to study. Let us take the high hand, and say that the Guttural Correspondence doesn't rime with anything, that it is just an amazing piece of sheer luck: nay, that it should serve us as a warning not to be led away like Macbeth—you remember how Banquo warned him that

"Oftentimes, to win us to our harms,
The instruments of darkness tell us truths,
Win us with honest trifles, to betray us
in deepest consequence."

—and breaks off abruptly to speak with his cousins.

Never forget the abiding temptation of men of science, the hidden rocks on which so many have been wrecked, to generalize on insufficient data. May the gods keep us from that! I dread it more than all the other snags put together.

With all due caution, therefore, let us attack our puzzle from the other end; let us see what astral experiment tells us about the philology of it!

Good! We'll call it D-Day and drop our paratroops. D is a sharp, sudden, forceful explosive sound, cut off smartly. Now then I can't tell whether you will connect this with ejaculation, with the idea of paternity. Whether or no, a vast number of people did so in the dawn of speech. Even to-day children seem instinctively to say "Dad" for "Father," though no allowance can be made for cases of mistaken identity. And the most ancient Father-Gods of the oldest and simplest civilizations are thus named. In Sumer He was AD, or ADAD, whence the later Egyptian Hadit, and the Semitic Adonai. (There are also words like AVD, the creative Magick). So also the Greeks in Syria knew Adonis, and the Latin Deus is itself the general word for God. Again, Valhalla houses Odin, Woden; and there are others. When the dental is complicated to a sibilant, as we shall see later, another idea is introduced; while the lightening of the sound to T has yet another effect.

Sanskrit also helps us with such roots as DETH, to show, DAM, to tame, DEVK, to lead, DHEIGH, to knead, mould, DHER, to support, DO, to give, DHE, to put and a while group of words like Deva, a divine being.

But that comes later: meanwhile, practise pronouncing these names, as also English words such as Do, Deed, Dare, Drive, Doubt, Dig, Dog, Dive, Duck, Dub while exploring the Abyss of your mind, and see whether you do not soon associate the D-sound with a swift, hard, definite, fertile and completed act. For a fair test, take only the oldest and simplest words, words which might naturally be wanted in the Stone Age.

The next sound-group to be considered may conveniently be N. Here at once we have innumberable Gods and Goddesses flocking up: Nu, Nuit, Ann, Noah, John, Oannes, On, Jonah, *et al*. With the exception of On, a special case, all these divine or semi-divine Beings refer to the Night, the Starry Heavens, the Element of Water, the North, the Mother-Goddess, as appears when we consider their legends and rituals. N, Nun, means a fish and refers to the water sign of Scorpio. (Note, later when we reach Sh, that Joshua was the Son of Nun.) To me the sound gives the idea of a continuum, an eternal movement; and this is of course our Thelemic conception of the Universe, the "Star-sponge," of which I have elsewhere written at such length.

But at the moment I am especially desirous that you should compare and contrast this letter with the S Sound. (S or Sh combined with T is discussed rather fully

in *Magick*, pp. 336-8)[5] You should find it child's play to determine the significance of the sibilant. It is the one letter which necessitates the exposure of the skeleton! (*I.e.*, the Subconscious). Hence "Hush!" it is the hiss of the snake, great Lord of Life and Death—(life? yes, the spermatozoon, child!) "Silence! Danger! There is a *man* somewhere about." The savage reaction. And, sure enough, Ish is the Hebrew for man (Mankind is ADM, Adam, Sanskrit *Admi*, the Father and Mother conjoined. "Male and Female created They Man.")

The S-gods are innumerable. Asar (Asi, Isis, is his female twin) Astarte, Ishtar or Ashtoreth, Set, Saturn, Shu, Zeus, (into whom the D intrudes, because S is the male as N the female, and D the father as M the mother) and the Jesus group. Here is the idea of the South, or East, both quarters referring, in ways very slightly divergent, to the element of Fire, the Sun, the Father-God in his aspect as the Holy Ghost. The ancient tradition appears in the Gospels: the Lesser Mysteries of John, beheaded with the Sword, and consumed on a Disk, and the Greater Mysteries of Jesus, pierced with a Wand, and consumed in a Cup. All same Tarot!

I am not at all sure how far it is wise to take this letter. To make it complete, we should need a Book about three times the size of *The Book of Thoth*, and I should want another half-century of research before I started to write it! As this seems for divers reasons a little awkward in practice, I am rather afraid that we must content ourselves with this very sketchy account: always, when one touches the subject, one "goes all woolly." One lacks not only completeness, but precision. Then there is the "over-lapping" nuisance, and the fact that the natures and the names of the Gods change slowly as time goes by. The confusion! The contradictions! I could wish to be the proverbial bargee. Oh! I could go on making excuses for another hour! I can't be helped; and I feel that I shall have rendered you quite a bit of service by calling your attention to the existence of the subject, by stimulating you to research, by suggesting certain potential lines on which to attack the same, and perhaps even by giving you a few tips which you may find useful in practical Magick.

The subject is closely bound up with Mantra-Yoga, and with Invocation. You will doubtless have noticed (for instance) that many chapters of the *Q'uran* have the letter L for a leit-motif. Islam attaches immense importance to this liquid L, as it appears in Allah (compare the Hebrew L-Gods, AL, Aloah, Elohim, A'alion, *etc*.,

and look up the L-idea in your *Book of Thoth*, and in *Magick*, pp. 331 sqq.[6]) and other peculiarly sacred names and words.

Before cursing my way to dinner—oh! how I hate the need of food unless I am practising the "Ninth Art" and disguise myself as a gourmet—I must mention the letter M. This is the only letter that can be pronounced with the lips firmly closed; it is the beginning of speech, and so the Mother of the Alphabet. (Distinguish from N, the letter of the Female). Look up *Magick* again; Chapter VII (pp. 45-49) gives a good account of M in discussing AUM. Note, too, the root MU "to be silent," form which we have the words Mystic, Mystery and others. As the letter of the Mother it appears to this day in nature everywhere, the first call of the child to "Mamma." In nearly every language, moreover, the word for Mother is based on M. Madar, Mere, Mutter, Umm, AMA or AIMA and the rest.

The vibrant R suggests light-rays: Ra, the Sun; the labials bring to mind the curves in Natureùyou will soon discover the words with a few little experiments; the T is a D, only lighter, quicker and younger—and so Good-night!

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

1) Grk., αγγελλος, a messenger or envoy; one that announces (Liddell & Scott intermediate) – T.S.

2) For multiple examples of this kind of thing, see also The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation (Uni. of Chicago Press, 1986, 1992) – T.S.

3) In a note to Kabbalah Unveiled (I.Z.Q. cap. XIX. s. 694) Mathers gives the division thus:

* Gutterals: Aleph, Heh, Cheth, Ayin
* Palatals: Gimel, Yod, Kaph, Qoph
* Linguals: Daleth, Tau, Teth, Lamed, Nun
* Dentals: Zayin, Samekh, Shin, Tzaddi
* Labials: Beth, Vau, Mem, Pé

(Resh is said to be classed as a gutteral by some, a dental by others) – T.S.

4) Here represent the obsolete Greek letter digamma.

5) The reference is to the discussion of the formula of LAShTAL in the essay accompanying Liber V vel Reguli – T.S.

6) The reference is again to Liber V – T.S

Chapter 69

Original Sin

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

It was at Dover. I had passed the Customs Inspector. Turning back, I said: "But perhaps I ought to have declared my Browning?" Much agitated, he muttered: "How ever did I come to miss that?" and began all over again. I helped him out: "You see, you were thinking of pistols, I of poetry." (There is a lesson in that!)

And now you—of all people!—fire him off at me. "Gold Hair" you write; "what about R.B's defence of Christianity?" You mean, of course,

"'Tis the faith that launched point-blank its dart
At the head of a lie, taught Original Sin, The corruption of man's heart."

It is impossible to commit all the possible logical errors in the course of a single syllogism; but he has an honest try.

1. It's not a man's heart, but a girl's.
2. He argues from an extravagantly rose case of aberration as if it were an universal rule.
3. All his premises are false; and even at that, defective.
4. *Non distributio medii.*
5. *Ignoratio elenchi.*
6. Need I go on?

For one thing, I have yet to learn who told the "lie." It was not until Rousseau that we had the nonsense about the "noble savage." But it is at least true that man's deepest instincts, being natural and necessary, are, for him, "right." It *is* true that an artificial society creates artificial crimes; but this is not "Original" Sin; on the contrary. What's that you say?

I laugh! I wondered when you were going to pull me up, and send me packing to my Skeat about what "Sin" means. O.K. Police routine does beat the gifted amateur. Sin, astonishingly, means *real*! Curtius tells us "Language regards the guilty man as the man *who it was*." Then, what is "guilt"? A.S. *gylt*, trespass; in our own Thelemic language, "deviation from (especially in the matter of excess, *trespasser*) the True Will." Please take notice that most of the words which denote misconduct imply wandering, either from the home or from the path: error, debauch, wrong (=twisted), wry, evil (excessive) *detraquer*, go astray, and several others. So I too leap into the breach with Curtius, and point out that "Language itself asserts the doctrine of the True Will." But what says The Book of the Law? It is at pains to define Sin in plain terms: "The word of Sin is Restriction. …" (AL I, 41). From the context it seems clear that this refers more especially to interference with the will of another.

This statement is the first need of the world to-day for we are plagued with Meddlesome Matties, male and female, whose one overmastering passion is to mind other peoples' business. They can think of nothing but "control." They aim at an Ethic like that of the convict Prison; at a civilization like that of the Bees or the Termites. But neither history nor biology acquaint us with any form of progress achieved by any of these communities. Penal settlements and Pall Mall Clubs have not even made provision for the perpetuation of their species; and all such "well-ordered" establishments are quite evidently defenceless against any serious change in their environment. They have failed to comply with the first requirements of biology; at best, they stagnate, they achieve nothing, they never "get anywhere."

A settled society is useful at certain periods; when, for instance, it is advisable to consolidate the gains gotten by pioneer adventurers; but history shows with appalling clarity that the very qualities which serve to protect must inevitably destroy the very conditions which they aim to preserve.

Hey! Hasn't the dear old *Book of Lies* got its word on the subject? Never known to fail!

The Wound of Amfortas

The Self-mastery of Percivale became the Self-Masturbatery of the Bourgeois.

Vir-tus has become "virtue."

The qualities which have made a man, a race, a city, a caste, must be thrown off; death is the penalty of failure. As it is written: In the hour of success sacrifice that which is dearest to thee unto the Infernal gods!

The Englishmen lives upon the excrement of his forefathers.

All moral codes are worthless in themselves; yet in every *new* code there is hope. Provided always that the code is not changed because it is too hard but because it is fulfilled.

The dead dog floats with the stream; in puritan France the best women are harlots; in vicious England the best women are virgins.

If only the Archbishop of Canterbury were to go naked in the streets and beg his bread!

The new Christ, like the old, is the friend of publicans and sinners; because his nature is ascetic.

O if everyman did No Matter What, provided that it is the one thing that he will not and cannot do.

That settles it.

We do progress; but how? Not by the tinkering of the meliorist; not by the crushing of initiative; not by laws and regulations which hamstring the racehorse, and handcuff the boxer; but by the innovations of the eccentric, by the phantasies of the hashish-dreamer of philosophy, by the aspirations of the idealist to the impossible, by the imagination of the revolutionary, by the perilous adventure of the pioneer. Progress is by leaps and bounds, but breaking from custom, by working on untried experiments; in short, by the follies and crimes of men of genius, only recognizable as wisdom and virtue after they have been tortured to death, and their murderers reap gloatingly the harvest of the seeds they sowed at midnight.

Damn it! All this is so trite that I am half ashamed to write it; and yet—everyone acquiesces with a smile, and goes off to vote another set of fetters for his feet!

Sin? This is the sin of sins: Restriction. All boots from the one last: all beautifully polished on parade; the March of Time will find not much but hobbling!

More of this when I answer your letter (just in as I drew rein to read this over) about Education.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

P.S. On reading this, I note that I passed over with deserved contempt the theory of "original sin" in the sense which you probably meant me to take: the defect deliberately implanted in man by "Old Nobodaddy" with no better object than to prepare the grotesquely tragic farce of the "Atonement." I will merely remark that no idea at once so base and so contemptible, so bestial and so idiotic, can challenge its ignoble absurdity.

Rotten with sex-perversion, it is a noisome blend of sadism and masochism based on the most abject form of fear.

The only argument for it is that it ever did exist; but it does *not* exist for wholesome minds.

Chapter 70

Morality [I]

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

"*Tu l'as voulu, Georges Dandin*!" I knew from the first that your sly, insidious, poisoned poniard, slipped in between my ribs, would soon or late involve a complete exposition of the whole subject of Morality.

Of we go! What really is it? The word comes from *Mos*, Latin for custom, manner. Similarly, ethics: from Greek ΕΘΟΣ, custom. "It isn't done" may be modern slang, but it's correct. Interesting to study the usage of "*moeurs*" and "*manières*" in French. "Manner" from "*manus*"—hand: it is "the way to handle things."

But the theological conception has steered a very wrong course, even for theology; brought in Divine Injunction, and Conscience, and a whole host of bogeys. (Candles in hollow turnips deceive nobody out- side a churchyard!)

So we find ourselves discussing a "palely wandering" phantom idea whose connotations or extensions depend on the time, the place, and the victim. We know "the crimes of Clapham chaste in Martaban," and the difference between Old and New Testament morality in such matters as polygamy and diet; while the fur flies when two learned professors go down with a smart attack of Odium Theologicum, and are ready to destroy a civilization on the question of whether it is right or wrong for a priest (or presbyter? or minister?) to wear a white nightie or a black in the pulpit.

But what *you* want to know is the difference between (a) common or area morality, (b) Yogin—or "holy man's" morality, and © the Magical Morality of the New Aeon of Thelema.

1. *Area Morality*: This is the code of the "Slave-Gods," very thorougly analysed, pulverized, and de-loused by Nietzsche in *Antichrist*. It consists of all the meanest vices, especially envy, cowardice, cruelty and greed: all based on over-mastering

Fear. Fear of the nightmare type. With this incubus, the rich and powerful have devised an engine to keep down the poor and the weak. They are lavish alike with threats and promises in Ogre Bogey's Castle and Cloud-Cuckoo-Land. “Religion is the opium of the people,” when they flinch no longer from the phantom knout.

2. _*Eight Lectures on Yoga* gives a reasonable account of the essence of this matter, especially in the talks on Yama and Niyama. (A book on this subject might well include a few quotations, notably from paragraphs 8, 9 and 10 in the former). It might be summarized as “doing that, and only that, which facilitates the task in hand.” A line of conduct becomes a custom when experience has shown that to follow it makes for success. “Don't press!” “Play with a straight bat!” “Don't draw to five!” do not involve abstract considerations of right and wrong. Orthodox Hinduism has raped this pure system, and begotten a bastard code which reeks of religion. A political manoeuvre of the Brahmin caste.

Suppose we relax a little, come down to earth, and look at what the far-famed morality of the Holy Man was, and is, in actual practice. You will find this useful to crush Toshophist and Antroposophagist[1)] cockroaches as well as the ordinary Christian Scolex when they assail you.

In the lands of Hinduism and (to a less extent) of Islam, the Sultan, the Dewan, the Maharajah, the Emir, or whatsoever they call “the Grand Pandjandrum Himself, with the little round button on top,” it is almost a 100 per cent rule that the button works loose and is lost! Even in less exalted circles, any absolute ruler, on however petty a scale, is liable to go the whole hog in an unexceptionably hoggish fashion. He has none to gainsay him, and he sees no reason for controlling himself. This suits nearly everybody pretty well; the shrewd Wazir can govern while his “master” fills up on “The King's Peg” (we must try one when champagne is once again reasonably cheap) and all the other sensuous and sensual delights unstinted. The result is that by the time he is twenty—he was probably married at 12—he is no longer fitted to carry out his very first duty to the State, the production of an heir.

Quite contrary to this is the career of the “Holy Man.” Accustomed to the severest physical toil, inured to all the rigours of climate, aloof from every noxious excess, he becomes a very champion of virility. (Of course, there are exceptions, but the average “holy man” is a fairly tall fellow of his hands). More, he has been particularly trained for this form of asceticism by all sorts of secret methods and

practices; some of these, by the way, I was able to learn myself, and found surprisingly efficacious.

So we have the law of supply and demand at work as uncomplainingly as usual: the Holy Man prays for the threatened Dynasty, blesses the Barren Queen; and they all live happy ever after. This is not an Arabian Night's Tale of Antiquity; it is the same today: there are very few Englishmen who have spent any time in India who have not been approached with proposals of this character.

Similar conditions, curiously enough, existed in France; the "*fils à papa*" was usually a hopeless rotter, and his wife often resorted to a famous monastery on the Riviera, where was an exceptionally holy Image of the Blessed Virgin Mary, prayers unto whom removed sterility. But when M. Combes turned out the monks, the Image somehow lost it virtue.

Now get your Bible and turn up Luke VIII, 2! When the sal volatile has worked, turn to John XIII 2,3[2)] and ask a scholar what any Greek of the period would have understood by the technical expressions there unambiguously employed.

Presently, I hope, you will begin to wonder whether, after all, the "morality" of the middle classes of the nineteenth century, in Anglo-Saxon countries, is quite as axiomatic as you were taught to suppose.

Please let me emphasize the fact that I have heard and seen these conditions in Eastern countries with my own ears and eyes. Vivekananda—certainly the best of the modern Indian writes on Yoga—complained bitterly that the old greymalkin witches of New York who called themselves his disciples had to be dodged with infinite precaution whenever he wanted to spend an evening in the Tenderloin. On the other hand, the Sheikh of Mish—and a very holy Sheikh he was—introduced his "boy friend" as such to me when I visited him in the Sahara, without the slightest shame or embarrassment.

Believe me, the humbug about "morality" in this country and the U.S.A., yes, even on the Continent in pious circles, is Hobgoblin No. 1 on the path of the Wise. If you are fooled by that, you will never get out of the stinking bog of platitudinous mouthings of make-believe "Masters." Need I refer to the fact that most of the unco' guid are penny plain hypocrites. A little less vile are those whose prejudices are Freudian in character, who "compound for sins that they're inclined to, By damning those they have no mind to."

Even when, poor-spirited molluscs, they are honest, all that twaddle is Negation. "Hang your clothes on a hickory limb, and don't go near the water!" does not produce a Gertrud Ederle. Thank God, the modern girl has cast off at least one of her fetters—the *ceinture de chastété*!

Perhaps we have now relaxed enough; we see that the "Holy man" is not such a fool as he looks; and we may get on with our excursions into the "Morality" of the Law of the New Aeon, which is the Aeon of Horus, crowned and conquering child: and—"The word of the Law is Θελημα."

3. So much of *The Book of the Law* deals directly or indirectly with morals that to quote relevant passages would be merely bewildering. Not that this state of mind fails to result from the first, second, third and ninety-third perusals!

"When Duty bellows loud 'Thou must!'
The youth replies 'Pike's Peak or Bust!'"

is all very well, or might be if the bellow gave further particulars. And one's general impression may very well be that Thelema not only gives general licence to to any fool thing that comes into one's head, but urges in the most emphatic terms, reinforced by the most eloquent appeals in superb language, by glowing promises, and by categorical assurance that no harm can possibly come thereby, the performance of just that specific type of action, the maintenance of just that line of conduct, which is most severely depreciated by the high priests and jurists of every religion, every system of ethics, that ever was under the sun!

You may look sourly down a meanly-pointed nose, or yell "Whoop La!" and make for Piccadilly Circus: in either case you will be wrong; you will not have understood the Book.

Shameful confession, one of my own Chelas (or so it is rather incredibly reported to me) said recently: "Self-discipline is a form of Restriction." (That, you remember, is "The word of Sin …".) Of all the utter rubbish! (Anyhow, he was a "centre of pestilence" for discussing the Book at all.) About 90 % of Thelema, at a guess, is nothing *but* self-discipline. One is only allowed to do anything and everything so as to have more scope for exercising that virtue.

Concentrate on "…thou hast no right but to do thy will." The point is that any possible act is to be performed if it is a necessary factor in that Equation of your Will. Any act that is not such a factor, however harmless, noble, virtuous or what not, is at the best a waste of energy. But there are no artificial barriers on any type

of act in general. The standard of conduct has one single touchstone. There may be—there will be—every kind of difficulty in determining whether, by this standard, any given act is “right” or “wrong”: but there should be no confusion. No act is righteous in itself, but only in reference to the True Will of the person who proposes to perform it. This is the Doctrine of Relativity applied to the moral sphere.

I think that, if you have understood this, the whole theory is now within your grasp; hold it fast, and lay about you!

Of course, there must be certain courses of action which, generally speaking, will be right for pretty well everybody. Some, *per contra*, will be generally barred, as interfering with another's equal right. Some cases will be so difficult that only a Magister Templi can judge them, and a Magus carry them wisely into effect. Fearsome responsibility, I should say, that of the Masters who began the building-up of the New Aeon by bringing about these Wars!

(I do wish that we had the sense to take our ideas of Peace conditions from the Bible, as our rulers so loudly profess that they do. The Enemy knows well enough that there is no other way to make a war pay.)

Now then, I hope that we have succeeded in clarifying this exceptionally muddy marish water of morality from most of its alien and toxic dirt; too often the Aspirant to the Sacred Wisdom finds no firm path under his feet; the Bog of Respectability mires him who sought the Garden of Delights; soon the last bubbles burst from his choked lungs; he is engulfed in the Slough of Despond.

In the passive elements of Earth and Water is no creative virtue to cleanse themselves from such impurity as they chance to acquire; it is therefore of cardinal importance to watch them, guard them, keep their Purity untainted and unsoiled; shall the Holy Grail brim with poison of Asps, and the golden Paten be defiled with the Bread of Iniquity? Come Fire, come Air, cleanse ye and kindle the pure instruments, that Spirit may indwell, inform, inspire the whole, the One Continuous Sacrament of Life!

We have considered this Morality from quite a number of very different points of view; wrought subtly and accurately into final shape, you should find no further difficulty in understanding fully at least the theoretical and abstract aspects of the business.

But as to your own wit of judgment as to the general rules of your own private Code of Morals, what is "right" and what is "wrong" for *you*, that will emerge only from long self-analysis such as is the chief work of the Sword in the process of your Initiation.

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

P.S. Most of this is stated or implied in *AHA!*

MARSYAS . . . . . Be ever as you can
A simple honest gentleman!
Body and manners be at ease,
Not bloat with blazoned sanctities!
Who fights as fights the soldier-saint?
And see the artist-adept paint!
Weak are the souls that fear the stress
Of earth upon their holiness!
They fast, they eat fantastic food,
They prate of beans and brotherhood,
Wear sandals, and long hair, and spats,
And think that makes them Arahats!
How shall man still his spirit-storm?
Rational dress and Food Reform!

OLYMPAS I know such saints.

MARSYAS An easy vice:
So wondrous well they advertise!
O their mean souls are satisfied
With wind of spiritual pride.
They're all negation. "Do not eat;
What poison to the soul is meat!
Drink not; smoke not; deny the will!
Wine and tobacco make us ill."
Magic is life: the Will to Live

Is one supreme Affirmative.
These things that flinch from Life are worth\\
No more to Heaven than to Earth.
Affirm the everlasting Yes!

OLYMPAS Those saints at least score one success:
Perfection of their priggishness!

MARSYAS Enough. The soul is subtlier fed
With meditation's wine and bread.
Forget their failings and our own;
Fix all our thoughts on love alone!

1) This is a reference to the school of thought of Rudolf Steiner. By the time of this writing, Steiner's students were being taught that Crowley was a “bad man.” Tit for tat. Anthroposophy presents a merging of several branches of mysticism with dance and movement. It rewards study, but one shouldn't mention A.C. at the Steiner schools until one has acquired what one wants! – WEH.

2) John XIII, 2-3 in the King James translation reads: “And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to bretray him; Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God.” Crowley, or the typesetter, or transcriber, may have got the references slightly confused, as Luke VIII, 3 (KJV) reads: “And Joanna, the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance.” Crowley alludes to this verse in a similar connection in The Gospel According to Saint Bernard Shaw – T.S.

Chapter 71

Morality [II]

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

The contents of your letter appalled me. I had hoped that you had left behind forever all that *quality* of thinking. It is unclean. It is stuffy and flabby. You write of a matter about which you cannot possibly have information, and what you say is not even a good guess; it is simply contrary to fact. It shows also that you have failed to grasp the nature of the O.T.O. Its main *raison d'etre*, apart from social and political plans, is the teaching and use of a secret method of achieving certain results. This secret is a scientific secret; it is guarded against betrayal or abuse by a very simple automatic arrangement. Its guardians cannot be "dying" any more than electricians as a class can be.

It is really difficult to answer your letters. You have got things so higgledy-piggledy. You write of the constitutions of two orders, the A∴ A∴ and the O.T.O.; yet you ignore the printed information about them which you are supposed to have read.

I have to answer each sentence of your letter separately, so incoherent have you become!

You are a "student" of A∴ A∴, and become a Probationer as soon as you take and pass the examination. (This is intended mostly to make sure that you have some general idea of the principal branches of the subject, and know the more important correspondences,) The rest:—please read *One Star in Sight* again, and do for God's sake try to assimilate the information there very clearly and very fully given!

It is terrifyingly near the state of mind which we symbolize by Choronzon, this hurrying flustered dash of yours from one point of view to another: a set of statements all true after a fashion, but flung out with such apprehensive agitation that a sensitive reader like myself comes near to being upset.

You say that you must tread the Path alone: quite true, if only because anything that exists for you is necessarily part of yourself. Yet you have to "go to others", and you become a veritable busybody. You quote odd opinions at random without the means of estimating their value.

Cannot I ever get you to understand the difference between an honest and dishonest teacher? I have always made it a rule never to put forward any statement of which I cannot produce proof; when I venture a personal opinion it is always Marked in Plain Figures to that effect. (I refer you to *Magick* p. 368: p. 375, paragraphs 1 and 2:. and p. 415, paragraphs 000 and 00. We insist from the beginning on the individual character of the work, and upon the necessity of maintaining the objective and sceptical standpoint. You are explicitly warned against reliance upon "authority," even that of the Order itself.) Consider my own assets, personal, social, educational, experiential and the rest: don't you see that all I had to do was to put out some brightly-coloured and mellifluous lie, and avoid treading on too many toes, to have had hundreds of thousands of idiots worshipping me?

Please get a Konx om Pax somehow, and read p. XII:

"It's only too easy to form a cult,
To cry a crusade with 'Deus Vult' . . . .

"A pinch of Bible, a gallon of gas,
And I, or any otherguess ass,
Could bring to our mystical Moonlight Mass
Those empty-headed Athenians."

and so on.

But I never forget that I am working on the 2,000 year basis; my work will stand when all the pompous platitudes and pleasant pieties have withered for the iridescent soft-soap bubbles that they are.

Soap! Yes, indeed. I work on *gold*, and gold must be cleansed with *acid*.

I really cannot understand how you can be so inaccurate, with the very text before your eyes! You write—"you write that in Jan. 1899 etc." But I don't. Captain J. F. C. Fuller wrote it.[1] A small point; but you must learn to be careful about every tiniest detail.

Then you go on about "not only invisible chiefs[2] of the A∴ A∴ . . . . . but also the Chiefs of the Golden Dawn . . ." The Golden Dawn is merely the name for the Outer Order: see *Magick* pp. 230-231. *You have never been taught to read carefully*. You write of Theoricus as the grade following Neophyte: it isn't. Back to _Magick_ pp. 230-231![3] You have never taken the trouble to go with me through the Rituals of O.T.O., or you would not ask such questions. The O.T.O. is a training of the Masonic type; there is no "astral" work in it at all, nor any Yoga. There is a certain amount of Qabalah, and that of great doctrinal value. But the really vital matter is the gradual progress towards disclosure of the Secret of the Ninth Degree. To use that secret to advantage involves mastery both of Yoga and of Magick; but neither is taught in the Order. Now it comes to be mentioned, this is really very strange. However, I didn't invent the system; I must suppose that those who did knew what they were about.

To me it is (a) convenient in various practical ways, (b) a machine for carrying out the orders of the Secret Chiefs of A∴ A∴, © by virtue of the Secret a magical weapon of incalculable power.

You are not "stuck." You can use your Astral Body well enough: too well, in one way. But I think you need a few more journeys with me: you ought to get on to the stage where the vision results from a definite invocation.

Do please forget all these vague statements about the "clarification of one's dream-life" (meaning what?) and "shadow-thinking" (meaning what?) These speculations are idle, and idleness is poison. In your very next paragraph you give the whole show away! "Artistically it appeals to me—but not spiritually." *You have been spiritually poisoned*.

What blasphemy more hideous could be penned? What lie so base, so false, so nasty, what so devilish and deadly a doctrine? I feel contaminated by the mere fact of being in a world where such filth is possible to conceive. I am all but in tears to think of my beloved sister tortured by so foul a denizen of the Abyss. Cannot you see in this the root of all your toadstool spawn of miseries, of doubts, of fears, of indecisions?

As an Artist you are a consecrated Virgin Priestess, the Oracle of the Most High. None has the right to approach you save with the most blessed awe, with arms outstretched as to invoke your benediction. By "spiritually" you mean no more than "according to the lower and middle-middle-class morality of the Anglo-

Saxon of the period when Longfellow and Tennyson were supposed to be poets, and Royal Academicians painters."

There is a highly popular school of "occultists" which is 99 % an escape-mechanism. The fear of death is one of the bogeys; but far deeper is the root-fear—fear of being alone, of being oneself, of life itself. With this there goes the sense of guilt.

The Book of the Law cuts directly at the root of all this calamitous, this infamous tissue of falsehood.

What is the meaning of Initiation? It is the Path to the realisation of your Self as the sole, the supreme, the absolute of all Truth, Beauty, Purity, Perfection!

What is the artistic sense in you? What but the One Channel always open to you through which this Light flows freely to enkindle you (and the world through you) with flowers of inexhaustible fervour and flame?

And you set up against That this spectre of grim fear, of shame, of qualms and doubts, of inward quakings lest — — you are too stricken with panic to see clearly what the horror is. You say "the elemental spirits and the Archangels are watching." (!) My dear, dear, sister, did you invent these beings for no better purpose than to spy on you? They are there to serve you; they are parts of your being whose function is to enable you to reach further in one particular direction or another without interference from the other parts, so long as you happen to need them for some service or other in the Great Work.

Please cleanse your mind once and for all of this delusion, disastrous and most damnable, that there can be opposition between two essential parts of your nature.

I think this idea is a monstrous growth upon the tetanus-soaked soil of your fear of "the senses." Observe how all these mealy-mouthed prigs develop their distrust of Life until hardly an action remains that is not "dangerous" or in some way harmful. They dare not smoke, drink, love—do anything natural to them. They are right!! The Self in them is Guilt, a marsh miasmal of foul pestilence. Last, since "nature, though one expel it with a pitchfork, always returns," they do their "sins" in secret, and pile hypocrisy upon the summit of all their other vices.

I cannot write more; it makes me too sad. I hope there is no need. Do be your Self, the radiant Daughter of the Muse!

With *that* command I turn to other tasks.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally yours ever,

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1) If the reference is to one of the first four installments of The Temple of Solomon the King then her mistake was excusable since Fuller's author credit was buried away in the Index to Equinox vol. I, and given Crowley's habit of talking about himself in the third person it was not an unreasonable assumption; if it was to anything in Equinox of the Gods, she was right and Crowley was wrong since the section of that book reprinted from Equinox I (7) was written by Crowley after Fuller had broken with him – T.S.

2) How do you know They are "invisible?" I foresee that sooner or later you will be asking for more information about them, so I am planning a separate letter to supply this. (See Letters IX, L and LXXVII)

3) Her confusion probably stemmed from the fact that Crowley re-named some of the Outer Order grades when reformulating the A∴A∴; Neophyte is 1○=10□ A∴A∴ and 0○=0□ in the original G.D.; Theoricus is 2○=9□ G.D. where it follows 1○=10□ Zelator (these titles derive in the first instance from the Masonic Societas Rosicruciana who may in turn have got them from the 18th century German "Golden and Rosy Cross") but is not an A∴A∴ title – T.S.

Chapter 72

Education

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Education means "leading out"; this is not the same as "stuffing in."

I refuse to enlarge on this theme; it is all-important. To extract something, you should first know what is there. Here astrology ought to give useful hints; its indications give the mind something to work on. Experience makes "confirmation strong as Holy Writ;" but beware of *à priori*. Do not be dogmatic; do not insist in the face of disappointment. Astrology in education is useful as geology is to the prospector; it tells you the sort of thing to look for, and the direction in which to explore.

There are, however, two main lines of teaching which are of universal value to normal children; it is hardly possible to begin too early.

Firstly, accustom his ear from the start to noble sounds; the music of nature and the rhythm of great poetry. Do not aim at his understanding, but at his subconscious mind. Protect him from cacophonous noise; avoid scoring any cheap success with him by inflicting jingles; do not insult him by "baby-talk."

Secondly, let him understand, as soon as you start actual teaching, the difference between the real and the conventional in what you make him memorize. Nothing irritates children more than the arbitrary "because I say so."

Nobody knows why the alphabet has the order which we know; it is quite senseless. One could construct a much more rational order: *e.g.* the Mother, the Single and the Double letters, all in the natural order of the elements, planets and signs. Again, we have the "Missionary" Alphabet, arranged "scientifically" as Gutturals, modified ditto, Dentals, Labials, vowels and so on; a most repulsive concoction! But I would not accept any emendation from the God Thoth himself; it is infinitely simpler to stick to the familiar order. But explain to the child that this is only for convenience, like the rule of the road; indeed, like almost any rules!

But when your teaching is of the disputable kind, explain that too; encourage him to question, to demand a reason and to disagree. Get him to fence with you; sharpen his wits by dialectic; lure him into thinking for himself. I want tricks which will show him the advantages of a given subject of study; make him pester you to teach him. We did this most successfully at the Abbey of Thelema in Cefalu; let me give you an instance: reading. One of us would take the children shopping and bring up the subject of ice-cream. Where, oh where could we get some? Presently one would exclaim and point to a placard and say, "I really do believe there'll be some there"—and lo! it was so. Then they would wonder how one knew, and one would say: Why, there's "Helados" printed on that piece of card in the window. They would want to learn to read at once. We would discourage them, saying what hard work it was, and how much crying it cost, at the same time giving another demonstration of the advantages. They would insist, and we should yield—to active, eager children, not to dullards that hated the idea of "lessons." So with pretty well everything; we first excited the child's will in the desired direction.

But (you ask) are there any special branches of learning which you regard as essential for all?

Yes.

Our old unvalued friend St. Paul, the cunning crook who turned the Jewish communism of the Apostles into an international ramp, saw in a vision a man from Macedonia who said "Come over and help us!" This time it has been a woman from California, but the purport of her plaints was identical. Much as I should like to see my Father the Sun once more before I die, nothing doing until—if ever—life recovers from the blight of regulations. Luckily, one thing she said helps us out: someone had told her that I had written on Education in *Liber Aleph—The Book of Wisdom or Folly*—which has been ready for the printer for more than a quarter of a century—and there's nothing I can do about it!

However, I looked up the typescript. The book is itself Education; there are, however, six chapters which treat of the subject in the Special sense in which your question has involved us.

So I shall fling these chapters headlong into this letter.

DE VOLUNTATE JUVENUM[1)]

Long, O my Son, hath been this Digression from the plain Path of My word concerning Children; but it was most needful that thou shouldst understand the

Limits of true Liberty. For that is not the Will of any Man which ultimateth in his own Ruin and that of all his Fellows; and that is not Liberty whose Exercise bringeth him to Bondage. Thou mayst therefore assume that it is always an essential Part of the Will of any Child to grow to Manhood or to Womanhood in Health, and his Guardians may therefore prevent him from ignorantly acting in Opposition thereunto, Care being always taken to remove the cause of the Error, namely, Ignorance, as aforesaid. Thou mayst also assume that it is Part of the Child's Will to train every Function of the Mind; and the Guardians may therefore combat the Inertia which hinders its Development. Yet here is much Caution necessary, and it is better to work by exciting and satisfying any natural Curiosity than by forcing Application to set Tasks, however obvious this Necessity may appear.

DE MODO DISPUTANDI[2)]

Now in this training of the Child is one most dear Consideration, that I shall impress upon thee as is Conformity with out holy Experience in the way of Truth. And it is this, that since that which can be thought is not true, every Statement is in some sense false. Even on the Sea of Pure Reason, we may say that every Statement is in some Sense disputable. Therefore in every Case, even the simplest, the Child should be taught not only the Thesis, but also its opposite, leaving the Decision to the child's own Judgment and good Sense, fortified by Experience. And this Practice will develop its Power of Thought, and its Confidence in itself, and its Interest in all Knowledge. But most of all beware against any Attempt to bias its Mind on any Point that lieth without the Square of ascertained and undisputed Fact. Remember also, even when thou art most sure, that so were they sure who gave Instruction to the young Copernicus. Pay Reverence also to the Unknown unto whom thou presumest to impart thy knowledge; for he may be one greater than thou.

DE VOLUTATE JUVENIS COGNOSCENDA[3)]

It is important that thou shouldst understand as early as may be what is the true Will of the Child in the Matter of his Career. Be thou well aware of all Ideals and Daydreams; for the Child is himself, and not thy Toy. Recall the comic Tragedy of Napoleon and the King of Rome; build not an House for a wild Goat, nor plant a Forest for the Domain of a Shark. But be thou vigilant for every Sign, conscious or unconscious, of the Will of the Child, giving him then all Opportunity to pursue the Path which he thus indicates. Learn this, that he, being young, will weary

quickly of all false Ways, however pleasant they may be to him at the Outset; but of the true Way he will not weary. This being in this Manner discovered, thou mayst prepare it for him perfectly; for no man can keep all Roads open for ever. And to him making his Choice explain how one may not travel far on any one Road without a general Knowledge of Things apparently irrelevant. And with that he will understand, and bend him wisely to his Work.

DE ARTE MENTIS COLENDI (1) MATHEMATICA[4)]

Now, concerning the first Foundation of Thy Mind I will say somewhat. Thou shalt study with Diligence in the Mathematics, because thereby shall be revealed unto thee the Laws of thine own Reason and the Limitations thereof. This Science manifesteth unto thee thy true Nature in respect of the Machinery whereby it worketh, and showeth in pure Nakedness, without Clothing of Personality or Desire, the Anatomy of thy conscious Self. Furthermore, by this thou mayst understand the Essence of the Relations between all Things, and the Nature of Necessity, and come to the Knowledge of Form. For this Mathematics is as it were the last Veil before the Image of Truth, so that there is no Way better than our Holy Qabalah, which analyseth all Things soever, and reduceth them to pure Number; and thus their Natures being no longer coloured and confused, they may be regulated and formulated in Simplicity by the Operation of Pure Reason, to their great Comfort in the Work of our Transcendental Art, whereby the Many become One.

SEQUITUR (2) CLASSICA[5)]

My son, neglect not in any wise the study of the Writings of Antiquity, and that in the original Language. For by this thou shalt discover the History of the Structure of thy Mind, that is, its Nature regarded as the last Term in a Sequence of Causes and Effects. For thy Mind hath been built up of these Elements, so that in these Books thou mayst bring into the Light thine own sub-conscious Memories. And thy Memory is as it were the Mortar in the House of thy Mind, without which is no Cohesion or Individuality possible, so that it is called Dementia. And these Books have lived long and become famous because they are the Fruits of ancient Trees whereof thou art directly the Heir, wherefore (say I) they are more truly germane to thine own Nature than Books of Collateral Offshoots, though such were in themselves better and wiser. Yes, O my son, in these Writings thou mayst study to come to the true Comprehension of thine own Nature, and that of the whole Universe, in the dimensions of Time, even as the Mathematic declareth it in that of

Space: that is, of Extension. Moreover, by this Study shall the Child comprehend the Foundation of Manners: the which, as sayeth one of the Sons of Wisdom, maketh Man.

SEQUITUR (3) SCIENTIFICA[6]

Since Time and Space are the conditions of Mind, these two Studies are fundamental. Yet there remaineth Causality, which is the Root of the Actions and Reactions of Nature. This also shalt thou seek ardently, that thou mayest comprehend the Variety of the Universe, its Harmony and its Beauty, with the Knowledge of that which compelleth it. Yet this is not equal to the former two in Power to reveal thee to thyself; and its first Use is to instruct thee in the true Method of Advancement in Knowledge, which is, fundamentally, the observation of the Like and Unlike. Also, it shall arouse in thee the Ecstasy of Wonder; and it shall bring thee to a proper Understanding of Art Magick. For our Magick is but one of the Powers that lie within us undeveloped and unanalysed; and it is by the Method of Science that it must be made clear, and available to the Use of Man. Is not this a Gift beyond Price, the Fruit of a Tree not only of Knowledge but of Life? For there is that in Man which is God, and there is that also which is Dust; and by our Magick we shall make these twain one Flesh, to the Obtaining of the Empery of the Universe.

I suppose I might have put it more concisely: Classics is itself Initiation, being the key of the Unconscious; Mathematics is the Art of manipulating the Ruach, and of raising it to Neschamah; and Science is co-terminous with Magick.

These are the three branches of study which I regard as fundamental. No others are in the same class. For instance, Geography is almost meaningless until one makes it real by dint of honest travel, which does not mean either “commuting” or “luxury cruises,” still less “globe-trotting.” Law is a specialized study, with a view to a career; History is too unsystematic and uncertain to be of much use as mental training; Art is to be studied for and by one's solitary self; any teaching soever is rank poison.

The final wisdom on this subject is perhaps the old “Something of everything, and everything of something.”

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours ever,

666

P.S. Better mention, perhaps, that literacy is no test of education. For ignorance of life, the don class leaves all others at the post; and it is these monkish and monkeyish recluses, with their hideous clatter and cackle, "The tittering, thin-bearded, epicene," "Dwarf, fringed with fear," the obscene vole, dweller by and in backwaters that has foisted upon us the grotesque and poisonous superstition that wisdom abides only in dogs-eared, worm-eaten, mule-inspired long-forgotten as misbegotten folios.

I like the story—it is a true tale—of the old Jew millionaire who bought up the annual waste of the Pennsylvania Railroad—a matter of Three Million Dollars. He called with his cheque very neatly made out—and signed it by making his mark! The Railroad Man was naturally flabbergasted, and could not help exclaiming, "Yet you made all those millions of yours—what would you have been if only you had been able to read and write?" "Doorkeeper at the Synagogue" was the prompt reply. His illiteracy had disqualified him when he applied for the job after landing.

The story is not only true, but "of all Truth;" see my previous letter on "Certainty."

Books are not the only medium even of learning; more, what they teach is partial, prejudiced, meagre, sterile, uncertain, and alien to reality. It follows that all the best books are those which make no pretence to accuracy: poetry, theatre, fiction. All others date. Another point is that Truth abides above and aloof from intellectual expression, and consequently those books which bear the Magic Keys of the Portal of the Intelligible by dint of inspiration and suggestion come more nearly to grips with Reality than those whose appeal is only to the Intellect. "Didactic" poetry, "realistic" plays and novels, are contradictions in terms.

P.P.S. One more effort: the above reminds me that I have said no word about the other side of the medal. There are many children who cannot be educated at all in any sense of the word. It is an abominable waste of both of them and of the teacher to push against brick walls.

Yet one last point. I am as near seventy as makes no matter, and I am still learning with all my might. All my life I have been taught: governesses, private tutors, schools, private and public, the best of the Universities: how little I know! I have

traveled all over the world in all conditions, from “grand seigneur,” to “holy man;” how little I know!

What then of the ninety-and-nine, dragged by the ears through suicide examinations, and kicked out of school into factory in their teens? They have learnt only just enough to facilitate the swallowing of the gross venal lies of the radio and the Yellow Press; or, if mother-wit has chanced to warn them, they learn a little—very little—more, getting their Science from a Shilling Handbook and so on, till they know just enough to become dangerous agitators.

No, anything like a real education demands leisure, the conversation of the wise, the means to travel, and the rest.

There is only one solution: to pick out the diamonds from the clay, cut them, polish them, and set them as they deserve. Attempt no idiot experiments with the muck of the mine! You will observe that I am advocating an aristocratic revolution. And so I am!

P.P.P.S. Short of the ideals above outlined, you may as well have a *pis aller*—words of astonishing insight and wisdom, not alien to the Law Thelema, and written by one who was trained on *The Book of the Law*.

“Self-confidence must be cultivated in the younger members of the nation from childhood onwards. Their whole education and training must be directed towards giving them a conviction that they are superior to others”, wrote Hitler.

“In the case of female education,” I read on, “the main stress should be laid on bodily training, after that on character, and, last of all, on the intellect; but the one absolute aim of female education must be with a view to the future mother.”

They are quoted as an extreme example of all that is horrible and evil by Mr. George E. Chust of the *Daily Telegraph*—from *Mein Kampf*!

P.P.P.P.S. There is a game, an improvement on the “Spelling Bee”—I have anti-christened it “Fore and aft” so as to be natty and naval—which is in my opinion one of the three or four best indoor games for two ever invented. Here are the rules, in brief: any disputed points? Apply to me.

1. A “Word” consists of four or more letters.

2. It must be printed in big black type in the Dictionary chosen for reference. (Nuttall's is fairly good, though some very well-known words are

omitted. The *Oxford Pocket Dictionary* is useless; it is for morons, illiterates, wallowers in “Basic English”—and [I suppose] Oxonians. No proper names, however well-known, unless used as common: e.g. Bobby, a flatfoot, a beetlecrusher, a harness bull; or Xantippe, a shrew, a lady. X-rays is given in the plural only: ditto “Rontgen-rays”, and they give “Rontgenogram”. “You never can tell!” Participles, plurals and the like are not “words” unless printed as such in big black type. E.g. Nuttall's “Juttingly” is a word; “jutting” is not, being in smaller type. “Soaking” is in small type, but also in big type as a noun; so it is a word.)

3. The Dictionary is the sole and final arbiter. This produces blasphemy, but averts assassination.

4. The first player starts with the letter A. The second may put any letter he chooses either before or after that A. The other continues as he will, and can.

5. The player who cannot add a letter without completing a “word” loses.

They proceed to B, and so on to Z.

6. A player whose turn it is must either add his letter within a reasonable (This is a matter of good feeling, courtesy and consideration) time, may say “I challenge” or, alternatively, “That is a 'word'.” The other must then give the “word” that he intends, or deny that it is a “word” within the meaning of the Art, as the case may be. The Dictionary decides the winner. The challenged player may give one word only, and that in the form which is printed in the Dictionary; e.g. if he were challenged at BRUSS, and answered Brussels, he would lose; if BRUSSELS-SPROUTS, he would win. Hyphens need not be given. CASHMERE is a “word”; it is a kind of shawl, etc., so is CHARLEY, a night-watchman. Don't argue: the Dictionary decides.

7. This game calls not only for an extensive vocabulary but for courage; foresight, judgment, resource, subtlety and even low cunning. It can be played by more than two players, but the more there are, the more the element of chance comes in; and this is hateful to really fine players and diminishes the excitement. The rapier-play of two experts, when a word changes from one line of formation to another, and then again, perhaps even a third time, is as exhilarating as a baseball-game or a bull-fight.

And what the Tartarus-Tophet-Jehanna has all this to do with Education, and the Great Work? This, child! H. G. Wells and others have pointed out with serene justice that a gap in your vocabulary implies a gap in your mind; you lack the

corresponding idea. Too true, “Erbert! But I threap that a pakeha with such xerotes as his will chowter with an arsis of ischonophony, beyond aught that any fub, even in Vigonia and dwale mammodis with a cascade from a Dewan tauty, a kiss-me-quick, a chou over her merkin and a parka over her chudder could do to save him, and have an emprosthotonos, when he reads this. Sruti!

(Whaur's your Wullie Chaucer noo?)

I put this in for you because an American officer,[7] very dear to me, flited from the Front for a few days to ask me a few questions—oh, “very much above your exalted grade” my dear—and I thought it might be useful to him to learn this game, needing, as it does, such very meagre apparatus, to wile away some of the long hours between attacks. He picked it up quickly enough; but, after a bit when I suggested that he should pass it on to his comrades-in-arms, he jeered at me openly!

Their vocabulary to mine, he said, holds just about the same proportion as mine does to yours; I hypothesized modestly, “about five per cent.” (After all, I am forty-five years his senior.) He roared at me. “Not one in a hundred,” he said, “know so much as the names of nine-tenths of the subjects that I discuss habitually and fluently. They gasp, they gape, they grunt, the gibber; it is almost always black bewilderment.[8]) And some of them are college graduates—which I'm not.”

He was snatched from school, and given a commission on the spot, apparently because he was one of very few that could be differentiated from the average Learned Pig.

All this made me exceeding sorrowful. I began to understand why my Liber OZ, written entirely in words of one syllable only, with this very idea in mind, turned out to be completely beyond the average man's (or woman's) understanding. I had some Mass Observation done on it.

“But this is rank socialism,” “Sy, ayn't this all Fascism?” “Oh Golly!” “Cripes!” “Coo!” “How *dreadful*!” about the nearest most of them got to Ralph Straus and Desmond MacCarthy!

Words of one syllable! Louis Marlow[9] had already told me what a fool I was to expect that. “All they can digest,” said he, “is a mess of stewed clichés with Bird's custard Power.”

Damn everything—it's true, it's true.

So do you at least get together the stones that you need to build your Basilica!

1) Lat., “Of the Will of Children.” Cap. 40 of Liber Aleph.

2) Lat., “Of the Method of Disputation.” Cap. 41 of Liber Aleph.

3) Lat., “Of Knowing the Will of a Child.” Cap. 42 of Liber Aleph.

4) Lat., “Of the Art of Cultivating the Mind: (1) Mathematics.” Cap. 47 of Liber Aleph.

5) Lat., “Continues: (2) Classics.” Cap. 48 of Liber Aleph.

6) Lat., “Continues: (3) Sciences.” Cap. 49 of Liber Aleph.

7) Probably Grady Louis McMurtry, who became “Caliph” or acting head of O.T.O. many years later – WEH.

8) They attach no meaning to these words:

* Palaeontology

* Criterion

* Vector

* Synthesis (They know “synthetic” but can't connect it with the noun)

* Epitome

* Foreign Policy (To them a mere phrase; no idea of its connotation or principles)

* Demology

* Entrepreneur

* Correspondent and Co-respondent. (They don't know the difference)

* Subcutaneous

* Chordee)

* Gleet) (Although they have them!)

* Histology (“Something to do with history”

9) Louis Umfraville Wilkinson wrote under this pen name. He was one of two individuals named to be literary executors under Crowley's Last Will and Testament – WEH.

Chapter 73

“Monsters”, Niggers, Jews, etc.

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Come now, is this quite fair? When I agreed to tip you off about Magick and the rest, I certainly never expected to be treated as if I were being interviewed by an American Sunday Newspaper. What do I prefer for breakfast, and my views on the future of the theatre, and is the Great White Brotherhood in favour of Eugenic Babies? No, dear sister—I nearly said sob-sister. But this I will say, you have been very artful, and led me on very cleverly—you must have been a terror to young men—for the matter of that, I dare say you are still!

And I don't see how to get out of swallowing this last sly bait; as you say, “Every man and every woman is a star.” does need some attention to the definition of “man” and “woman.” What is the position, you say, of “monsters”? And men of “inferior” races, like the Veddah, Hottentot and the Australian Blackfellow? There must be a line somewhere, and will I please draw it? You make me feel like Giotto!

There is one remark which I must make at the beginning. It's some poet or other, Tennyson or Kipling, I think (I forget who) that wrote: “Folks in the loomp, is baad.” It is true all round. Someone wisely took note that the vilest man alive had always found someone to love him. Remember the monster that Sir Frederick Treves picked up from an East End peep-show, and had petted by princesses? (What a cunning trick!) Revolting, all the same, to read his account of it. He—the monster, not Treves!—seems to have been a most charming individual—ah! That's the word we want. Every individual has some qualities that endear him to some other. And per contra, I doubt if there is any class which is not detestable to some other class. Artists, police, the clergy, “reds,” foxhunters, Freemasons, Jews, “heaven-born,” women's clubwomen (especially in U.S.A.), “Methodys,” golfers, dog-lovers; you can't find one body without its “natural” enemies. It's right, what's worse; every class, as a class, is almost sure to have more defects than qualities.“

As soon as you put men together, they somehow sink, corporatively, below the level of the worst of the individuals composing it. Collect scholars on a club committee, or men of science on a jury; all their virtues vanish, and their vices pop out, reinforced by the self-confidence which the power of numbers is bound to bestow.

It is peculiarly noticeable that when a class is a ruling minority, it acquires a detestation as well as a contempt for the surrounding "mob." In the Northern States of U.S.A., where the whites are overwhelming in number, the "nigger" can be more or less a "regular fellow;" in the South, where fear is a factor, Lynch Law prevails. (Should it? The reason for "NO" is that it is a confession of weakness.) But in the North, there is a very strong feeling about certain other classes: the Irish, the Italians, the Jews. Why? Fear again; the Irish in politics, the Italians in crime, the Jews in finance. But none of these phobias prevent friendship between individuals of hostile classes.

I think that perhaps I have already written enough—at least enough to start you thinking on the right lines. And mark well this! The submergence of the individual in his class means the end of all true human relations between men. Socialism means war. When the class moves as a class, there can be no exceptions.

This is no original thought of mine; Stalin and Hitler both saw it crystal-clear; both, the one adroitly, the other clumsily, but with equally consummate hypocrisy, acted it out. They picked individuals to rule under their autocracy, killed off those that wouldn't fit, destroyed the power of the Trades Unions or Soviets while pretending to make them powerful and prosperous, and settled down to the serious business of preparing for the war which both knew to be inevitable.

It is this fundamental fact which ensures that every democracy shall end with an upstart autocrat; the stability of peace depends upon the original idea which aggrandized America in a century from four millions to a hundred: extreme individualism with opportunity. Our own longest period of peace abroad (bar frontier skirmishes like the Crimean war) and prosperity at home coincided with Free Trade and Laissez-faire.

Now we may return, refreshed, to the main question of monsters, real (like Treves') or imaginary like Jews and niggers.

'Arf a mo! Haven't we solved the problem, ambulando? Everything would be okydoke and hunkydory if only we can prevent classes from acting as such?

I suppose so. Then, what about a spot of pithy paradox for a change?

Why should the classes want to act as classes? It's obvious; “Union is strength.” The worst Fifteen can do more with a football than the best opposing team of one—excuse my Irish!

Well, what tortoise is *that* elephant based upon? Why, still obviously, upon the universal sense of individual weakness. We all want a big bruvver to tell of him! Hence the Gods and the Classes. It's *fear* at the base of the whole pyramid of skulls.

How right politicians are to look upon their constituents as cattle! Anyone who has any experience of dealing with any class as such knows the futility of appealing to intelligence, indeed to any other qualities than those of brutes.

And so, whenever we find one Man who has no fear like Ibsen's Doctor Stockmann or Mark Twain's Colonel Grainger that strolled out on his balcony with his shotgun to face the mob that had come to lynch him, he can get away with it. “An Enemy of the People” wrote Ibsen, “Ye are against the people, O my chosen!” says *The Book of the Law*. (AL II, 25).

Not only does it seem to me the only conceivable way of reconciling this and similar passages with “Every man and every woman is a star.” to assert the sovereignty of the individual, and to deny the right-to-exist to “class-consciousness,” “crowd-psychology,” and so to mob-rule and Lynch-Law, but also the only practicable plan whereby we may each one of us settle down peaceably to mind his own business, to pursue his True Will, and to accomplish the Great Work.

So never lose sight for a moment of the maxim so often repeated in one context or another in these letters: that fear is at the root of every possibility of trouble, and that “Fear is failure, and the forerunner of failure. Be thou therefore without fear; for in the heart of the coward virtue abideth not.”

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

Chapter 74

Obstacles on the Path

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Peccavi! And how! But my excuse is good, and I will try to make amends.

First, a little counter-attack—your letter is so rambling and diffuse that at first I couldn't make out what you were getting at, and at last decided that it is much too random to reproduce, or even to deal with in detail. I shall simply formulate the case for the Prosecution, plead guilty, and appeal for clemency.

The gravamen is that the Path of the Wise is gay with flowers, gilded with kiosks, and beset with snares; that every step is the Abode of Terror and Rapture—and all that! Yet I habitually write in the manner of a drunken dominie! You "gaped for Aeschylus, and got Theognis."

I tempted you, it seems with *The Chymical Marriage of Christian Rosencreutz*, its incomparable mystery and glamour, its fugitive beauty, its ineffable romance, its chivalry and its adventure, pellucid gleams as of sunlight under the sea, vast brooding wings of horror overshadowing the firmament, yet with strong Starlight constant over- bead. And then I let you down! You did expect at least something of the atmosphere of the *Arabian Nights*; if not so high, of Apuleius and *Petronius Arbiter*; of Rabelais, Meinhold, de la Motte Fouqué; and the *Morte d'Arthur* in later times, of Balzac, Dumas, Lytton, Huysmans, Mabel Collins and Arthur Machen.

You look at me with strange sad eyes: "But you, too, Master, have not you too led a life as strange, as glamourous, as weird and as romantic, as the best of them? Then why this cold detachment from that ambience?" Well, if you put it like that, I can only say that I feel at the same time more guilty and entirely innocent!

For, while the charge is true, the defence is not to be shaken.

The worst of all teachers are the Boloney Magnates, of whom I have already given some account. But the next worst are just exactly those who try to create an atmosphere of romance, and succeed only in a crude theatricalism. So, avoiding the swirling turmoil of Scylla, I have broken the ship on the barren rock Charybdis.[1)]

Now let me hearten you, brave sister! All the old tales are true! You can have as many dragons, princesses, vampires, knights-errant, glendowers, enchanted apes, Jinn, sorcerers and incubi as you like to fancy, and—whoa Emma! did I tell you about Cardinal Newman? Well, I will.

The one passage in his snivelling Apologia which impressed me was a tale of his childhood—before the real poet, lover and mystic had been buried beneath the dung-heap of Theology. He tells us that he read the *Arabian Nights*—in a heavily Bowdlerized edition, bet you a tosser!—and was enchanted, like the rest of us, so that he sighed "I wish these tales were true!" The same thing happened to me; but I set my teeth, and muttered: "I will *make* these tales true!"

Well, I have, haven't I? You said it yourself!

Let me be very frank about one point. It has always puzzled me completely why one is forbidden to relate certain of one's adventures. You remember, perhaps, in one of these letters I started out gaily to tell you some quite simple things—I couldn't, can't, see quite what harm could come of it—and I was pulled up sharp—yes, and actually punished, like a school-boy! I had often done much more impudent things, and nobody seemed to give a hoot. Oh somebody tell me why!

The only suggestion that occurs to me is that I might somehow be "giving occasion to the enemy to blaspheme." Let it go at that! "Enough of Because! Be he damned for a dog!"

Yes child, my deepest attitude is to be found in my life. I have been to most of the holy inaccessible places, and talked with the most holy inaccessible men; I have dared all the most dangerous adventures, both of the flesh and of the spirit; and I challenge the world's literature to match for sublimity and terror such experiences as those in the latter half of *The Vision and the Voice*.

You understand, of course, that I say all this merely in indication; or rather, as I said before, as an appeal for clemency.

On the contrary (you will retort) you are a mean cat (Felis Leo, please!) not to let us all in on the ground floor of so imposing a Cathedral!

To atone? Not a catalogue, which would be interminable; not a classification, which would be impossible, save in the roughest terms; nothing but a few short notes, possibly an anecdote or so. Just a tickle or a dram of schnapps, to enliven the proceedings—ordeals—temptations—that sort of thing. A general Khabardar karo! With now and then a snappy Achtung!

Oh, curse this mind of mine! I just can't help running to hide under the broad skirts of the Qabalah! It's Disk, Sword, Cup and Wand again! Sorry, but *c'est trop fort pour moi*.

Disks. To master Earth, remember that the Disk is always spinning; fix this idea, get rid of its solidity.

Commonly, the first tests of the young Aspirant refer to cash—"that's God's sol solid in this world." The proper magical attitude is very hard to describe. (I'm not talking of that black hen's egg any more; that is simple.) Very sorry to have to say it, but it is not unlike that of the spendthrift. Money must circulate, or it loses its true value. A banker in New York once told me that the dollar circulated nine times as fast as the English equivalent, so that people seemed to themselves to be nine times as rich. (I told you about the £100 note in a special letter on Money). But here I am stressing the spiritual effect; what happens is that anxiety vanishes; one feel that as it goes out, so it comes in. This view is not incompatible with thrift and prudence, and all that lot of virtues, far from it, it tucks in with them quite easily. You must practise this; there's a knack in it. Success in this leads to a very curious result indeed; not only does the refusal to count (Fourpen'north or Yoga, please miss, and Mum says can I have a penny if I bring back the bottle!), bring about the needlessness of counting, but also one acquires the power to command!

A century ago, very nearly, there lived in Bristol and "Open Brother" names Muller, who was a wizard at this; Grace before breakfast, the usual palaver about the Lord and His blessings and His bounty *et cetera, da capo*; to conclude "and, Blessed Lord, we would humbly venture to remind Thee that this morning Thou art £3 4s. 6 1/2d. short in the accounts; trusting that Thou wilt give this small matter Thine immediate attention, for Jesus' Christ's sake, Amen." Sure enough, when he came to open his post, there would be just enough, sometimes exactly enough, to cover that amount.

This story was told me by an enemy, who thought quite seriously that he would go to Hell for being "Open." ("Open" Brethren were lax about the Lord's Supper, let people partake who were not sound upon the Ramsgate Question; and other Theological Atrocities!) It meant that the facts were so undeniable that the "advertisement for Answer to Prayer" outweighed the "miracle by a heretic."

I knew a poetess of great distinction who used to amuse herself by breaking off a conversation and saying, "Give me a franc" (or a shilling, or any small sum) and then going on with her previous remarks. She told me that of over a hundred people I was the second who had passed the coin to her without remark of any kind.

This story—do you think?—is neither here no there. No, my remarks are rarely asyntartete. The Masters, at one stage or another of initiation—it is forbidden to indicate the conditions—arrange for some test of the Aspirant's attitude in some matter, not necessarily involving cash. If he fails, goodnight!

Swords, now. The snags connected with this type of test are probably the nastiest of any. Misunderstanding, confusion, logical error (and, worse, logical precision of the kind that distinguishes many lunatics), dispersion, indecision, failure to estimate values correctly—oh!—there is no end to the list. So much so, indeed, that there is no specific critical test, it is all part of the routine, and goes on incessantly.

Well, there is just one. Without warning a decision of critical importance has to be made by the candidate, and he is given so many minutes to say Yes or No. He gets no second chance.

But I must warn you of one particular disgrace. You know that people of low mentality haunt fortune-tellers of equal calibre, but with more low cunning. They do not really want to know the future, or to get advice; their real object is to persuade some supposed "authority" to flatter them and confirm them in their folly and stupidity.

It is the same thing with a terrifying percentage of the people that come for "teaching" and "initiation." The moment they learn anything they didn't know before, off they fly in a temper! No sooner does it become apparent that the Master is *not* a stupid middle-class prig and hypocrite—another edition of themselves, in short—they are frightened, they are horrified, they flee away on both their feet, like the man in the Bible! I have seen people turn fish-belly pale in

the face, and come near fainting outright, when it has dawned upon them suddenly that magick is a real thing!

It's all beyond me!

Cups: we are much more definite again. The great test is so well known, and accounts have already been published, that it can be here plainly stated. Early in his career, the Aspirant is exposed to the seductions of a Vampire, and warned in due form and due season.

“Sleep with A,B,C,D,E and F, my lad, and our hearty best wishes! But not with G on any account, on peril of your work!”

So off he goes to G, without a second's hesitation. This test may be prolonged; the deadliness and subtlety of the danger has been recognized, and he may have half a dozen warnings, either direct or springing from his relations with her. And the penalty is not so drastically final; often he gets off with a term of penal servitude.

On the other hand, the Aspirant who can spot at the first hint why the Masters think that particular woman a danger, and acts promptly and decisively as he should, is secretly marked down as a sword of very fine temper indeed!

The rest of the Cup Ordeals consists for the most part of progressive estimations of the quality of the Postulant's devotion to the work; there is not, as a rule, anything particularly spectacular or dramatic in it. If you stick to your Greetings and Adorations and all such mnemonics, you are not likely to go very far wrong.

Wands: this obviously a pure question of Will. You will find as you go on that obstacles of varying degrees of difficulty confront you; and the way in which you deal with them is most carefully watched. The best advice that I can give is to remember that there is little need of the Bull-at-a-Gate method, though that must always be ready in reserve; no, the best analogy is rapier-play. Elastic strength. Warfare shows us.

That seems to cover your question more or less; but don't forget that it depends on yourself how much of the dramatic quality colours your Path. I suppose I have been lucky to have had the use of all the traditional trappings; but it is always possible to make a “coat of many colours” out of a heap of rags. To show you that you have had Chaucer and John Bunyan—yes, and Laurence Sterne: to bring up the rear, James Thomson (B.V.) to say nothing of Conrad and Hardy. Nor let me

forget *The Cream of the Jest* and *The Rivet in Grandfather's Neck* of my friend, James Branch Cabell.

So now, fair damozel, bestride thy palfrey, and away to the Mountains of Magick!

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

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P.S. One danger I had purposely passed over, as it is not likely to come your way. But, since others may read these letters—

Some, and these the men of highest promise, often of great achievement, are tempted by Treason. The acquire a "Judas-complex," think how splendid it would be if they were to destroy the Order—or, at the very least, unhorse the Master.

This is, of course, absurd in itself, because if they had crossed the Abyss, they would understand why it is impossible. It would be like "destroying Electricity," or "debunking" the Venus of Milo. The maximum of success possible in such an operation would be to become a "Black-Brother;" but what happens in practice, so far as my own experience goes, is complete dispersion of the mental faculties amounting to suicide; I could quote no less than four cases in which actual physical self-murder was the direct result.

Chapter 75

The A∴A∴ and the Planet

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

You Write:

Am I to understand that the A∴ A∴ has two main lines of Work. (1) The initiation of Individuals, (2) Action on the world in general—say "Weltpolitik"? Because your letters on the # History of Magick do imply (2); and yet the A∴ A∴ discourages any form of group working. Is it that the Masters (8° = 3□ Magistri Templi) having been admitted to the Third Order—the A∴ A∴ proper; below this are R.R. et A.C. and G∴ D∴—are no longer liable to the dangers which make group activity in lower grades undesirable. Or do they still work as Individuals, yet, *because* they are *initiates*, *appear* to act as a corporate body? You have often expressed yourself as if this were so. 'Of course, They had to pick on me to do the dirty work' is a typical growl of the old Big Lion! But again there is that Magical Memory of yours when you came down from that Hermitage in the little wood overhanging the nullah below the Great Peak 'somewhere in Asia' and sat in some sort of Consistory in the valley where the great Lamaserai—or whatever it was—towers over the track, (I quote some of your phrases from memory.) Which is it?"

My dear child, that is all very sensibly put; and the answer is that Convenience would decide. Then you go on, after a digression:

"Then how are They acting at present? What impact has the new Word, Thelema, made upon the planet? What are we to expect as a result? And can we poor benighted outsiders help Them in any way? I know it's 'cheek' to ask."

then turn the other cheek, and repeat the question! I will do my best to make it all clear. But do not forget that I am myself completely in the dark with regard to the special functions of most of my colleagues.

To begin, then!

Achtung! I am going to be hard-boiled; my first act is to enlist the Devil himself in our ranks, and take the Materialistic Interpretation of History from Karl Marx, and accept economic laws as the manifest levers which determine the fortune of one part of the earth or another.

I shall take exception only by showing that these principles are secondary: oil in Texas, nitrates on the Pacific slope of the Andes, sulphur in Louisiana (which put Etna's nose out of joint by making it cheaper for the burgers of Messina to import it from four thousand miles away instead of digging it out of their own back garden), even coal and timber, upset very few apple-carts until individual genius had found for these commodities such uses as our grandfathers never dreamed.

The technical developments of almost every form of wealth are the forebears of Big Business; and Big Business, directly or indirectly, is the immediate cause of War.

In the "To-day and to-morrow" series is an essay called *Ouroboros*, by Garet Garrett; one of the most shrewd and deep-delving analysis of economics ever written. May I condense him crudely? Mass Production for profit fails when its markets are exhausted; so every effort is made to impose it not only on the native but the foreigner, and should guile fail, then force!

But the process ineluctably goes on; when the whole world buys the nasty stuff, and will accept no other, the exploiter is still faced by diminishing returns. No possibility of expansion; sooner or later dividends dwindle, and the Business is Bust.

To even the most stupid it becomes plain at this stage that war is wholly ruinous; organization breaks down altogether; one meaningless revolution follows another; famine and pestilence complete the job.

Last time—when Osiris replaced Isis—the wreck was limited in scope—note that it was the civilized, the organized part that broke down. (Jews and Arabs could remain aloof, and keep a small torch burning until Light returned with the Renaissance.)

This time there is no civilization which can escape being involved in the totality of the catastrophe.

Towards this collapse all totalitarian movements inevitably tend.

Bertrand Russell himself admits that, although himself "temperamentally Anarchistic," Society must be yet more organized than it is to-day if it is to exist at all.

But his, as Garet Garrett shows, is the John Gilpin type of horsemanship. We are to-day more or less at the stage where "off flew Gilpin's hat and wig."

Achievement of high aims, which tends ultimately to the well-being, the prosperity of the republic, depends on the proportion of masters to servants. The stability of a building depends on the proportion of superstructure to foundations. The rule holds good in every department of Nature. There is an optimum for every case. If there is one barber for ten thousand men, most of them will remain unshorn; if there are five thousand barbers, most of them will be out of a job.

Apply this measure to society; there must be an optimum relation between industry and agriculture, between town and country. When the proper balance is not struck, the community must depend on outside help, importing what it lacks, exporting its surplus. This is an unnatural state of affairs; it results in business, and therefore ultimately in war. That is, as soon as the stress set up by the conditions becomes insupportable. So long as "business" is confined to luxuries, no great harm need result; but when interference with the flow of foreign trade threatens actual necessities, the unit concerned realizes that it is in danger of strangulation. Consider England's food supply! Switzerland, Russia, China, the U.S.A. can laugh at U-boats. England must support a Navy, a wealth-consuming, not a wealth-producing, item in the Budget. Similar remarks apply to practically all Government Departments. The minimum of organization is desirable; all artificial doctrinaire multiplication of works which produce no wealth is waste; and for many reasons (some absurd, like "social position") tend to create fresh unnecessary necessities. *Ad infinitum*, like the fleas in the epigram!

When laws are reasonable in the eyes of the average man, he respects them, keeps them, does his best to maintain them; therefore a minute Police Force, with powers strictly limited, is adequate to deal with the almost negligibly small criminal class. A convention is laudable when it is convenient. When laws are unjust, monstrous, ridiculous, that same average man, will he-nill he, becomes a criminal; and the law requires a Tcheka or a Gestapo with dictatorial powers and no safeguards to maintain the farce. Also, corruption becomes normal in official circles; and is excused. I refer you to Mr. J. H. Thomas.[1)]

One evil leads to another; the seven devils always take possession of a house that is swept and garnished to he point at which people find it uncomfortable.

But is not all this beside the point, you ask? No. It was needful to indicate this cumulative progression to social shipwreck, because, to-day an obvious peril of the most menacing, in 1904 no ordinary sane person foresaw anything of the sort. But special knowledge alters things, and it is certain that the Masters anticipated, with great exactness of calculation, the way things would go in the political world.

Practically all the messages received during the "Cairo Working" (March-April 1904 e.v.) came to me through Ouarda. No woman ever lived who was more ignorant of, or less interested in, anything to do with politics, or the welfare of the race; she cared for nothing beyond her personal comfort and pleasure. When the communications ceased, she dropped the whole affair without a thought.

She nearly always referred to the authors of these messages as "They:" when asked who "They" were, she would say haltingly and stupidly "the gods," or some equally unhelpful term. But she was always absolutely clear and precise as to the instructions. The New Aeon was to supersede the old; my special job was to preserve the Sacred Tradition, so that a new Renaissance might in due season rekindle the hidden Light. I was accordingly to make a Quintessence of the Ancient Wisdom, and publish it in as permanent a form as possible. This I did in *The Equinox*. I should perhaps have been strictly classical, and admitted only the "Publication in Class "A", "A-B", "B" and "D" material. But I had the idea that it would be a good plan to add all sorts of other stuff, so that people who were not in any way interested in the real Work might preserve their copies.

This by the way: the essence this letter is to show that "They", not one person but a number acting in concert, not only foresaw a planet-wide catastrophe, but were agreed on measures calculated to assure the survival of the Wisdom worth saving until the time, perhaps three hundred or six hundred years later, when a new current should revive the shattered thought of mankind.

The Equinox, in a word, was to be a sort of Rosetta Stone.

There is one other matter of incomparable importance: the wars which have begun the disintegration of the world have followed, each at an interval of nine months, the operative publications of *The Book of the Law*. This again seems to make it almost certain that "They" not only know the future, at least in broad outline, but are at pains to arrange it. I have no doubt that the advance of Natural Science is in

the charge of a certain group of "Masters." Even the spiritually and morally as well as the physically destructive phenomena of our age must be parts of some vast all-comprehensive plan.

Putting two and two together, and making 718, it looks as if the Masters acquiesced in and helped to fulfill, the formula of the catastrophic succession of the Aeons.

An analogy. We have the secret of the Elixir of Life, and could carry on in the same body indefinitely; yet at least some masters prefer to reincarnate in the regular way, only taking care to waste no time in Amennti, but to get back to the Old Bench and pick up the New Tools with the minimum of delay.

By having attained the Freedom of "Elysian, windless, fortunate abodes Beyond Heaven's constellated wilderness" "we are blessed; and bless" by refusing to linger therein, but shouldering once more "Atlantean the load of the too vast orb of" the Karma of Mankind.

This hypothesis does at least make intelligible Their action in riding for a fall instead of preventing it. It may also be that They feel that human progress has reached its asymptote so far as the old Formula can take it. In fact, unless we take some such view, there does not seem to be much point in taking an action so fundamentally revolutionary (on the surface) as the proclamation of a New Word.

But then (you will object, if an objection it be) people like Lenin, Hitler, Mussolini, the Mikado, *et hoc genus omne*, are loyal emissaries of the Masters, or the gods! Well, why not? An analogy, once more. In the Christian legend we find God (omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent) employing Judas, Pilate and Herod, no less than Jesus, as actors in the Drama which replaced Isis by Osiris in the Great Formula. Perfectly true; but this fact does not in any way exculpate the criminals. It is no excuse for the Commandants of Belsen and Buchenwald that they were acting under orders. The Drama is not mere play-acting, in which the most virtuous man may play the vilest of parts.

Your further objection, doubtless, will be that this theory makes the Masters responsible for the agony of the planet. I refer you to <u>The Book of the Heart Girt with a Serpent</u>, Cp I, v. 33-40.

Let us take our delight in the multitude of men!

Let us shape unto ourselves a boat of mother-of-pearl from them, that we may ride upon the river of Amrit!

Thou seest yon petal of amaranth, blown by the wind from the low sweet brows of Hathor?

(The Magister saw it and rejoiced in the beauty of it.) Listen!

(From a certain world came an infinite wail.)

That falling petal seemed to the little ones a wave to engulph their continent.

So they will reproach thy servant, saying: Who hath set thee to save us?

He will be sore distressed.

All they understand not that thou and I are fashioning a boat of mother-of-pearl. We will sail down the river of Amrit even to the yew-groves of Yama, where we may rejoice exceedingly.

The joy of men shall be our silver gleam, their woe our blue gleam—all in the mother-of-pearl.

And again, Cp. I, v. 50-52 and v. 56-62.

Adonai spake yet again with V.V.V.V.V. and said:

The earth is ripe for vintage; let us eat of her grapes, and be drunken thereon.

And V.V.V.V.V. answered and said: O my lord, my dove, my excellent one, how shall this word seem unto the children of men?

And He answered him: Not as thou canst see.

It is certain that every letter of this cipher hath some value; but who shall determine the value? For it varieth ever, according to the subtlety of Him that made it.

. . . .

And Adonai said: The strong brown reaper swept his swathe and rejoiced. The wise man counted his muscles, and pondered, and understood not, and was sad.

Reap thou, and rejoice!

Then was the Adept glad, and lifted his arm.

Lo! an earthquake, and plague, and terror on the earth!

A casting down of them that sate in high places; a famine upon the multitude!

And the grape fell ripe and rich into his mouth.

Stained is the purple of thy mouth, O brilliant one, with the white glory of the lips of Adonai.

The foam of the grape is like the storm upon the sea; the ships tremble and shudder; the shipmaster is afraid.

That is thy drunkenness, O holy one, and the winds whirl away the soul of the scribe into the happy haven.

O Lord God! let the haven be cast down by the fury of the storm! Let the foam of the grape tincture my soul with Thy light!

. . . .

Yes, I dare say. But is there not here a sort of moral oxymoron? Are not the Masters pursuing two diametrically opposed policies at the same time?

Genius—or Initiation, which implies the liberation and development of the genius latent in us all (is not one of names of the "Holy Guardian Angel" the Genius?)—is practically the monopoly of the "crazy adventurer," as the official mind will most certainly rate him. Then why do not the Masters oppose all forms of organization tooth-and-nail?

It depends, surely, on the stage which a society has reached on its fall to the servile state. Civilization of course, implies organization up to a certain point. The freedom of any function is built upon system; and so long as Law and Order make it easier for a man to do his True Will, they are admirable. It is when system is adored for its own sake, or as a means of endowing mediocrities with power as such, that the "critical temperature" is attained.

It so happens that I write this on the eve of a General Election in England; and it seems to me that whichever wins, England loses: The Socialists openly proclaim that they mean to run the country on the lines of a convict prison; but the Tories, for all their fine talk, would be helpless against the Banks and the Trusts to whom they must look for support.

Still, perhaps with a little help from Hashish, one can imagine a Merchant Prince or a Banker being intelligent, or even, in a weak moment, human; and this is not the case with officials. The standard, moreover, of education and Good Manners, low as it is, is less low in Tory circles.

As I think that totalitarian methods are already on the way to extinguish the last spark of manly independence—that is, in self-styled civilized countries—it seems to me that we all should regard with shrewd suspicion any plans for "perfecting" social conditions. The extreme horror is the formula of the gregarious type of insect. Inherent in the premises is the impossibility of advance.

One may sum the policy of the A∴ A∴ as follows:

1. To assist the initiation of the individual.
2. To maintain a form of social order in which the adventure of initiation is easy—to undertake!
3. To work out the Magical Formula of the New Aeon.

"Ye-e-ss, I s-e-e."

I doubt it. But what you are asking is how to decide upon your personal programme.

The intelligent visitor from who knows what planet was puzzled. He chanced to have landed in England—to find a General Election in full blast. (The operative word is "blast".) They must be absolute imbeciles, was his first reaction, to risk upsetting the policy of Government with a first-class war on.

(There would have been no need of such nonsense—I interrupted—if Parliament was elected by my simple plan. I'll give you the main idea; I don't insist on the figures. When a candidate is returned by 50 per- cent over his runner-up, he sits for five years. If forty percent, four years; and so on. An alternative—to "stagger" the assembly, as (I think) is done in the Senate of the United States.)

How are you going to vote?

Rather like the question of the dentist.[2)] The teeth can be tinkered: of course, sooner or later they have to go. Is it worth the trouble and expense? The Socialists would have them all out right away, and replaced by a set of "dentures," which (obviously) are perfect. Arrange them, change them, choose your own pattern; no trouble, no pain: all one's dream come true! But hardly biological.

You may argue that convicts are examples of living individuals whose safety, shelter, nourishment and the rest are organized with the utmost care; but accidents will happen in the best-regulated "brown stone jugs." The one ideally automatic case is the foetus. You will agree that here is lack of initiative; in fact, its "True

Will" is to escape, albeit into a harsh and hostile universe, fraught with unknown and incalculable dangers.

As the Ritual says: "Prepare to enter the Immeasurable Region!"[3)]

I think your decision should depend on how far caries has travelled on its road of destruction.

I do *not* think that the Masters need be unanimous.

A practical plan might be for them to concentrate on one particular group, or one part of the world, and to keep this in as good shape as possible until the time has come for Nature to grow a new set.

They will be grown on a new Formula, to meet the new needs, just as when our "permanent" (Alas, not much!) set replace our milk-teeth.

You ask me if I think this change can be made without bloodshed.

No. The obscure autocrats of Diplomacy and Big Business are infinitely stupid and short-sighted; they cannot see an inch beyond their too often stigmatically shapen probosces, except where the profit of the next financial year is concerned. They live in perpetual panic, and shy at their own shadows. The accordingly attack even the most innocuous windmills in suicidal charges.

Yes: *bella, horrida bella*,
Et flavem Tibrim spumantem sanguine cerno.

So, whichever way you vote, you are asking for trouble, or would do, if the vote had any meaning. The result of any election, or for the matter of that any revolution, is an almost wholly insignificant component of those stupendous and inscrutable Magical Forces which determine the destinies of the planet.

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

1) The Chancellor of the Exchequer, having fixed the increase of Income Tax at threepence, proceeded to defraud the Insurance Companies by insuring himself against a rise of the sum!

2) Crowley suffered from bad teeth in his last years, finally having them extracted about six months before his death in 1947 e.v. It is speculated that secondary infection from the extraction may have contributed to his death from pneumonia in December of that year – WEH.

3) The quote is from the Golden Dawn Zelator ritual – T.S.

Chapter 76

The Gods: How and Why they Overlap

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

I am glad: it shows you have been putting in some genuine original work. Result! You make a very shrewd observation; you have noticed the curious fashion in which Gods seem to overlap. It is not the same (you point out) with Angels. In no other system do we find a parallel for the Living Creatures, Wheels, Wings, Fiery Serpents,[1] with such quasi-human cohorts as the Beni Elohim who beget the children on women,[2] to whom the Qabalah has introduced us. The Beni Elohim is actually an exception; there is the Incubus and some of the Fairy Folk, as well as certain Gods and demi-Gods, who act thus paternally. But you are right in the main. The Arabs, for example, have "seven heavens" and seven Orders of Angels, also Jinn; but the classes are by no means identical. This, even though certain Archangels, notably Gabriel, appear in both systems. But then Gabriel is a definite individual, a person—and this fact is the key to your puzzle.

For, as I have explained in a previous letter, Gods are people: macrocosms, not mere collocations of the elements, planets and signs as are most of the angels, intelligences and spirits. It is interesting to note that Gabriel in particular seems to be more than one of these; he enjoys the divine privilege of being himself. Between you and me and the pylon, I suspect that Gabriel who gave the Q'uran to Mohammed was in reality a "Master" or messenger of some such person, more or less as Aiwass describes himself as "…the minister of Hoor-paar-kraat." (AL I, 7) His name implies some such function; for G.B.R. is Mercury between the Two Greater Lights, Sol and Luna. This seems to mean that he is something more than a lunar or terrestrial archangel; as he would appear to be from *777*. (There now! That was my private fiend again—the Demon of Digression. Back to our Gods!) *777* itself, to say nothing of *The Golden*

Bough and the Good Lord knows how many other similar monuments of lexicography (for really they are little more), is our text-book. We are bound to note at once that the Gods sympathise, run into one another, coalesce much more closely than any other of the Orders of Being. There is not really much in common between a jackal and a beetle, or between a wolf and an owl, although they are grouped under Pisces or Aries respectively. But Adonis, Attis, Osiris, Melcarth, Mithras, Marsyas — — — a whole string of them comes tripping off the tongue. They all have histories; their birth, their life, their death, their subsequent career; all goes naturally with them exactly as if they were (say) a set of warriors, painters, anything superbly human. We feel instinctively that we know them, or at least know of them in the same sense that we know of our fellow men and women; and that is a sense which never so much as occurs to us when we discuss Archangels. The great exception is the Holy Guardian Angel; and this as I have shewn in another letter is for exactly the same reason; He is a Person, a macrocosmic Individual. (We do not know about his birth and so on; but that is because he is, so to speak, a *private* God; he only appears to the world at all through some reference to him by his client; for instance, the genius or Augoeides of Socrates).

Let us see how this works in practice. Consider Zeus, Jupiter, Amon-Ra, Indra, etc., we can think of them as the same identical people known and described by Greeks, Romans, Egyptians and Hindus; they differ as Mont Cervin differs from Monte Silvio and the Matterhorn.

(They are bound to *appear* different, because the mountain does not look the same from Zermatt as it does from Domodossola, or even as seen by a French-Swiss and a German-Swiss.) In the same way read the Life of Napoleon written by one of his marshals, by Michelet (a rabid Republican), by Lord Rosebery, by a patriotic Russian, and by a German poet and philosopher: one can hardly believe that the subject of any two of these biographies is the same man.

But upon certain points the identity is bound to transpire; even when we read of his crushing and classic defeat at Waterloo by the Belgians, the man is detected. Transferring the analogy to the Gods, it is then open to us to suppose that Tahuti, Thoth, Hermes, Mercury, Loki, Hanuman and the rest are identical, and that the diversity of the name and the series of exploits is due merely to the accidents of time and space. But it is at least equally plausible to suggest that these Gods are different individuals, although of the identical Order of Being,

characteristics and function. Very much as if one took Drake, Frobisher, Raleigh, Hood, Blake, Rodney and Nelson, as seen through the mists of history, tradition, legend and plain mythopoeia. Add a few names not English, and our position is closely parallel. Personally, I incline to the latter hypothesis; but it would be hard to say why, unless that it is because I feel that to identify them completely would be to reduce their stature to that of personifications of various cosmic energies.

History lends its weight to my view. When the philosophic schools, unable to refute the charge of absurdity leveled at the orthodox devotee who believed that Mars actually begot Romulus and Remus on a Vestal Virgin, explained that Mars was no more than the martial instinct, and the Virgin a type of Purity, their faith declined, and with it Roman Virtue. "Educate" Colonel Blimp's children and we have the "intelligentsia" of Bloomsbury. I am very sorry about all this; but life must always be brutal and stupid so long as it depends upon animals and vegetables for nourishment.

How restore faith in the Gods? There is only one way; we must get to know them personally. And that, of course, is one of the principal tasks of the Magician.

One further remark. I have suggested that all these "identical" gods are in reality distinct persons, but belonging to the same families. Can we follow up this line of thought? Yes: but I will defer it to a subsequent letter.

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

1) These are just the English names of various of the Qabalisitc "Choirs of Angels." – T.S.

2) Genesis VI. 2, 4. See also the Book of Enoch – T.S.

Chapter 77

Work Worthwhile: Why?

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Your remarks on my 0 = 2 letter are very apt and inspiriting—that is if I have rightly understood what you want to say. (Really, you know, they *are* a bit muddled—or I am!) May I frame your question, if it is a question, in my own terms? Yes? Right.

You say that I have advanced an invulnerable theory of the Universe in philosophical and mathematical language, and you suppose (underlined three times with two question marks) that one could, with a great effort, deduce therefrom perfectly good reasons for an unswerving contemplation of one's umbilicus, or the performance of strange dances and the vibration of mysterious names. But what are you to say (you enquire) to the ordinary Bloke-on-the-Boulevard, to the man of the world who has acquired a shrewd knowledge of Nature, but finds no rational guide to the conduct of life. He observes many unsatisfactory elements in the way things go, and for his own sake would like to "remould them nearer to the heart's desire, to refurbish the cliché of Fitzgerald about "this sorry scheme of things." He is not in the least interested in the learned exposition of 0 = 2. But he is aware that the A∴ A∴ professes a sound solution of the problem of conduct and would like to know if its programme can be justified in terms of Common Sense.

As luck would have it, only a few weeks ago I was asked to address a group of just such people—and they gave me three-quarters of an hour's notice. It was really more like ten minutes, as the rest of the time was bespoke by letter-writing and posting which could in no wise be postponed.

So I had to devise an adequate gambit, one which ruthlessly excluded any touch of subtlety, or any assumption of previous knowledge of the subject on the part of the audience.

It came off. For the first time in history, the laymen elicited intelligent and relevant questions. There were only three half-wits in the five score or so persons present, and these (naturally!) were just those people who claimed to have studied the subject.

What follows is a rough outline of my argument.

I began by pointing out that Nature exercises many forms of Energy, which are not directly observable by the senses. In fact, the History of Science for the last hundred and fifty years or so has consisted principally of the discovery of such types, with their analysis, measurement and manipulation. There is every reason to suppose that many such remain to be discovered.

But what has in no case been observed is any trace of will or of intelligence, except through some apparatus involving a nervous and cerebral system.

At this point I want especially to call your attention to certain species of animals (bees and termites are obvious cases) where a collective consciousness seems to exist, since the community acts as a whole in evidently purposeful ways, yet the units of that community are not even complete in themselves. (Isn't there some series of worms, each sub-type able only to subsist on the excrement of its preserver in the series?)

Then there are the phenomena of mob psychology, where a crowd gleefully combine to perform acts which would horrify any single individual. And there is the exceeding strange and interesting psychology of the "partouse"—this is a little more, in my judgment, than a spinthria.

In all such cases the operative consciousness does not reside in any single person, as one might argue that it did when an orator "carries away" his audience. But these remarks have rather shunted one into a siding away from the main line of argument. My most important point is to insist that even with the most familiar forms of energy, man has done no creative work so ever. He has discovered, examined, measured (rather clumsily) and used, but in no case has he understood, still less explained, the causes of phenomena. Sometimes he cannot even reconcile different "laws of Nature." So we find J.W.N. Sullivan exclaiming "The scientific adventure may yet have to be abandoned," and to me personally he confessed "It may yet turn out that the mathematical approach to Reality may have to be supplanted by the Magical."

Now in Nature it leaps at one that Will and Intelligence are behind phenomena. My old friend and colleague Professor Buckmaster, who wrote a book on "Blood" which, he admitted, could not possibly be understood by more than six people, told me that the ingenuity of the structure of the human kidney "almost frightened" him. Yet in all Nature there is no trace whatever of any purpose such as human mentality can grasp. Again, apparent purpose often appears to be baffled. Take one example. Evolution, working through thousands of years to establish a most subtle scheme of cross-fertilization, found, just as it was perfect, conditions so altered that it was completely useless.

The "law of cause and effect" itself took a death-blow when Hesinger showed that the old formula "If A then B" was invalid, and must be altered to "If A, then B or C or D or E or . . . "

But at least we know enough phenomena to make it certain that Will and Intelligence do exist somehow apart from any nervous and cerebral system of which we are aware, and that these must be of a type which transcends our human consciousness as that does that of a limpet or a lichen. It follows that somehow, somewhere, there must be "gods" or "Masters"—whatever name you like. And that, I suppose, is what you may call the premise major of my syllogism.

The minor, I confess, is not so apodeictic. No one, I suppose, is going to point proudly to the present state of human affairs, as evidence that we are all becoming wiser and nobler every minute, as people did seventy years ago. (I was brought up in the faith that Queen Victoria would never die, and that Consols would never go below par.)

In face, one may suspect that the majority of well-instructed men expect nothing but that History will repeat itself, and our civilization go the way of all the others whose ruins we dig up in every quarter of the earth.

(Our own destruction may be more complete than theirs; for most of the monuments to our intelligence, sobriety and industry are made of steel, and would vanish in a very few years after the smash.)

Well, if we have to wait for the calamity, and for evolution to begin all over again in a number of centuries—with luck!—one thing is at least quite certain: we can do nothing about it. Any form of activity must be as futile and as fatuous as any other; and the only sensible philosophy must be "Let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die."

Is there a conceivable alternative?

Well, consider the cause of the impending collapse. It is quite simple: Knowledge is loose, without control of Will and of Intelligence. (How clearly the Qabalah states and demonstrates this doctrine! But I musn't be naughty; let me stick to Common Sense!)

Now, these qualities in us having failed to measure up to the situation of the world, one hope remains; to get into communication with those "gods" or "masters" whose existence was demonstrated in my Premise Major and learn from Them.

But is this possible?

Tradition and experience unite to assert that it is so; moreover, various forms of technique for accomplishing this are at our disposal. This is what is called The Great Work; and it is abundantly clear that no other aim is worth pursuit.

So much for the argument; it will be agreed readily enough that to put it into practice we shall need an Alphabet, a Grammar and a Dictionary. Follow the Axioms, the Postulates, the Theorems; finally, the Experiments.

And that is what all these letters are about.

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

Chapter 78

Sore Spots

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Three in one and one in three—it's the Athanasian Creed in the Black Mass—eh! What's that you say? Oh, quite right, quite, quite right of you to remind me. "Definition first!"

A "sore spot" is one which reacts abnormally and violently, however gently you touch it; more, all the other bits of you give a painful jerk, however disconnected they may seem. Still more, the entire System undergoes a spasm of apprehension; and the total result is that the mental as well as the physical system is quite unable to grasp the situation with any accuracy, and the whole man is temporarily engulphed in what is naturally not far from a condition of insanity.

(Now, Athanasius! It's all right; the lady has gone away to think it over.)

In—shall I say "Anglo-Saxondom," or "Teutonic breeds," or "bourgeoisie," so as to include some of the French whom when they are good are very good indeed, but when they are bad, they are horrid?—the presiding God/Gods of this Trinity is/are: 1. Sex, 2. Religion, 3. "Drugs;" and the greatest of these is Sex, actually the main root of which the other two are tough and twisted stems, each with its peculiar species of poisonous flowers, sometimes superficially so attractive that their nastiness passes for Beauty.

I shall leave it to the psychoanalysts to demonstrate the reduction to Sex, merely remarking that though I agree with their analysis as far as it goes, I do not allow it to stop where they do.

For us, Sex is the first unconscious manifestation of Chiah, the Creative Energy; and although (like everything else) it is shown both on the spiritual and the physical planes, its most important forth-showing is on the "Magical" plane, because it actually produces phenomena which partake of all these. It is the True Will on the creative plane: "By Wisdom formed He the worlds." So soon as its

thaumaturgy is accomplished, it is, through Binah, understood as the Logos. Thus in Sex we find every one of the primary Correspondences of Chokmah. Being thus ineffable and sacrosanct, it is (plainly enough) peculiarly liable to profanation. Being profaned, it is naturally more unspeakably nasty than any other of the "Mysteries." You will find a good deal on this subject implied in Artemis Iota, attached to another of my letters to you.

Before tackling "Sore Spots" seriously, there is after all, one point which should be made clear as to this Trinitarian simplification.

One of the most interesting and fruitful periods of my life was when I was involved in research as to the meaning of Sankhara: "tendencies" may be, indeed is, a good enough translation, but it leaves one very much as deeply in the dark as before. You remember—I hope!—that Sankhara lies between Vinnanam, Pure Consciousness, and Sanna, Perception. For instance, an electric fan in motion: a house-fly "tends" to see the vanes as we do when they are still, we "tend" to see a diaphanous blur.

Then, in delirium tremens, why do we tend to see pink rats rather than begonias or gazelles?

We tend to see the myriad flashing colours of the humming bird; the bird itself does not; it has no apparatus of colour-sense; to him all appears a neutral tint, varying only in degrees of brightness.

Such were some of the fundamental facts that directed the course of my research, whose results you may read in "The Psychology of Hashish", by Oliver Haddo in *The Equinox*, Vol. I, No. 2. The general basis of this Essay is Sankhara; it shows how very striking are the analogies between, (1) the results obtained by Mystics—this includes the Ecstasy of Sexual Feeling, as you may read in pretty nearly all of them, from St. Augustine to St. Teresa and the Nun Gertrude. The stages recounted by the Buddha in his psychological analyses correspond with almost incredible accuracy. (2) The phenomena observed by those who use opium, hashish, and some other "drugs" (3) The phenomena of various forms of insanity.

The facts of this research are infuriating to the religious mystic; and the fact of its main conclusion is liable to drive him into so delirious a frenzy of rage as to make one reach for one's notebook—one more typical extreme case!

Now of course very few religious persons know that they are mystics—already it annoys them to suggest it!—but, whether the lady doth protest too much, or too

little, the fact is that they are. There is no true *rational* meaning in religion. Consider the Athanasian Creed itself!

Observe that the rationalist dare not yield a millionth of a millimetre.

"First cut the Liquefaction, what comes next
But Fichte's clever cut at God himself? . . .
The first step, I am master not to take:"

says Bishop Blougram, and is pinned to the cork labelled "St. Januarius"!

This dilemma, consciously or subconsciously, is well rooted in the minds of everybody who takes Life, in any one of its forms, seriously. He feels the touch of the rapier, however shrewdly or cautiously wielded. The salute itself is more than enough; he feels already the thrust to his vitals.

I remember sailing happily in to breakfast at Camberwell Vicarage, and saying cheerfully, in absolute good faith: "A fine morning, Mr. Kelly!" I was astounded at the reply. The dear old gentleman—and he really was one of the best!—half choked, then gobbled at me like a turkey! "You're a very insolent young man!" Poor, tiny Aleister! How was I to know that his son had driven it well home that the hallmark of English stupidity was that the only safe topic of conversation was the weather. And so my greeting was instantly construed as a deliberate insult!

A typical example of the irrationality of the reactions of a sufferer!

Now, from this schoolboy level, let us rise and put the case a little more strongly. Let us quit the shallows of social backchat for the gloomy and horrific abysses of a murder trial!

To every man and woman that has not seen Sex as it is, faced it, mastered it—you will find elsewhere in these letters sufficient on this matter—it is his secret guilt. Imagine, then, how at any reference however remote, the "sinner" quails, his inmost mystery laid bare, his evil conscience holding up a tarnished mirror to his deformed and hideous face!" Often enough, he does not mind gross jests which admit complicity on the part of the other; but any allusion to the Truth, and his soul shrieks: I am found out!" Then apoplectic Fear puts on the mask of Indignation and Disgust.

As for a serious discussion of anything concerned therewith, why, every word is a new rasping tear. The mind takes refuge in irrational and irrelevant outbursts of feigned rage and horror.

In the case of religion, the consciousness of guilt extended to cover everything from "playin' chuch-farden on the blessÂ,d tombstones" to "the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost." Against this vague and monstrous bogey, religion is the only safeguard, and therefore to suggest the unsoundness of the guarantee is to strike at the roots of all security. It is like hinting to some besotted and uxorious oldster, that his young wife may be unfaithful. It is the poison that Iago dripped so skillfully into the long hairy ear of the dull Moor. So he reacts irrationally—every bush conceals a bear—nay, more likely a Boojum,[1] or a Bunyip,[2]) or some other creature of fear-spurred Imagination! "*Monstrum informe, ingens, horrendum*."[3] Note well the "*informe*."

And because the guarantee is unsound (and must be, or where would be the point of "Faith"?) reassurance is in the nature of things impossible. Like the demented rider in *The Erl-King*, the chase goes ever wilder and wilder, until he plunges at the end into the bottomless bog of madness and destruction.

I wonder how many lunatics there are in the "bughouse" to-day—in the times of "evangelical revival" the number was fantastic—who got there through fear that they had somehow committed the aforesaid "blasphemy against the Holy Ghost." The unknown again. *The Bible* does not tell us that it is; only that it is unpardonable. Nor Grace, nor Faith, nor predestination avail in the least; for all you know, you may have committed it. Reassurance is impossible; no *ceinture de chastetée* avails to avert *this* danger.

Again with drugs, it is the unknown which is the horrific factor. Most people get their information on the subject from the yellowest of yellow newspapers, magazines and novels. So darkly deep is their ignorance that that do not know what the word means—like us so often, yes?

Wide sections of the U.S.A. are scared of tea and coffee. They blench when you point out that bicarbonate of soda is a drug just as much as cocaine; at the same time they literally shovel in the really dangerous Aspirin, to say nothing of the thousand Patent Medicines blared at them from every radio—as if the Press were not enough to poison the whole population! Blank-eyed, they gasp when they learn that of all classes, the first place among "drug addicts" is that of the doctor.

But the crisis in which fear becomes phobia is the unreasoning aversion, the shuddering of panic, above all, the passionate refusal to learn anything about "drugs," to analyse the conditions, still less to face them; and the spasmodic invention of imaginary terrors, as if the real dangers were not enough to serve as a warning.

Now why? Surely because in the sub-conscious lies an instinct that in these obscure medicines indeed lies the key of some forbidden sanctuary. There is a fascination as irrational and therefore as strong, as the fear. Here is the point at which they link up with sex and religion. Oh, how well nigh almighty is the urgency to him who reads those few great writers who understood the subject from experience: de Quincey, Ludlow, Poe and Baudelaire: into whom burn the pointed parallels between their adventures and those of all the mystics, East and West!

The worst of this correspondence-form is that you are always asking simple elementary questions which require half a dozen treatises to answer: so, take this, with my blessing!

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

P.S. One further reflection. With all these "sore spots" is closely linked the idea of cruelty. I need not touch upon the relation of cruelty to sex; the theme has been worn threadbare. But in religion, note the Bottomless Pit and the Eternal Flame; in Buddhism, the eighteen hot and eighteen cold Hells, with many another beneath. Hindu eschatology has countless Hells; even pedestrian, precise Islam, and the calculating Qabalists, each boast of Seven. Again with drugs as with insanity, we are confronted constantly with nameless terrors; the idea of formlessness, of infinity pervades them alike. Consider the man who takes every chance gesture of a stranger in the street as a secret sign passed from one of his persecutors to another; consider those who refuse food because of the mysterious conspiracy to poison them.

All sanity, which is all Science, is founded upon Limit. We must be able to cut off, to define, to measure. Naturally, then, their opposites, Insanity and Religion, have for their prime characteristic, the Indefinable, Incomprehensible, Immeasurable.

The healing virtue of these words is this: examine the sore spot, analyse it, probe it; then disinfection and the *Vis Medicatrix Naturae*, complete the cure.

I had just finished this when in comes your very pertinent "Supplementary"" Postcard. "Doesn't hypocrisy fit in here, somehow?" Indeed it does, my child!

Corresponding to, and the poison bacillus of, that centre of infection, is a Trinity of pure Evil, the total abnegation of Thelema. Well known to the psycho-analyst: the name thereof Shame—Guilt—Fear. The Anglo-Saxon or bourgeois mentality is soaked therein; and his remedy so far from our exploratory-disinfection method, is to hide the gangrened mass with dirty poultices. He has always a text of Scripture or some other authority to paint his foulest acts in glowing colours; and if he wants a glass of beer, he hates the stuff, but —doctor's orders, my boy, doctor's orders.—

There is really nothing new to be said about hypocrisy; it has been analysed, exposed, lashed by every great Artist; quite without effect. It gets worse as the socialistic idea thrives, as the individual leans ever harder on the moral support of the herd.[4)]

P.S. Here is a very different set of reactions. I do not quite know why I am putting it in; is it some sub-conscious attraction of my own? Anyhow, here it is; call it

LA POULE AUX RATS

Time: a fine Sunday evening in June, just one and twenty years ago. Place: Paris, just off the Place des Tertres, overlooking the city. A large and lovely studio, panelled in oak. Strange: it was completely bare, and so far as one could see, it had no door. The skylights, mindful, were carefully screened with broidered stuff. A gallery, some ten feet from the floor, ran round one corner. Here was a buffet loaded with priceless wines and liquors of all sorts—except the "soft"—and excellent variety of all cold "snack" refreshments. One gained it by a staircase from the lower floor.

By the buffet, the old butler: oh, for a painter to portray his Weariness of Evil Wisdom!

Our host led us to the gallery; "we ate and drank and saw" not God also, but the lady responsible for the heavy tread upon the stairs. A woman of the Halles Centrales, in her early forties; coarse, brutal, ugly, robust, square-set, curiously radiant with some magnetic form of energy.

I cannot describe her clothes—for lack of material. She greeted us all round with a sort of surly good humour. The butler took a pot of very far-gone Roquefort cheese, and smeared her all over. She drank to us, and clumped away downstairs. She came out into the studio from under the gallery, braced herself and shook her mop of hair as if about to wrestle, waved to us and waited.

A minute later a small trap at the far end of the studio was smartly pulled up; in rushed a hundred starving rats. There was a moment's hesitation; but the smell of the cheese was too much, and they rushed her. She caught one in both hands, bit through its spine, and flung it aside.

Softly repeating to myself passages from *The Revenge* by the late Alfred Lord Tennyson, of which the scene most powerfully reminded me. "Rat after rat, for half an hour, flung back as fast as it came." Their courage wilted; the hunted became the huntress; I thought of Artemis as I sang softly to myself, "When the hounds of spring are on winter's traces."[5] But she pursued; snapped the last spine, and flung it into the gallery with a yell of triumph.

It was not so easy a victory as I have perhaps described it, once she slipped in the slime and came down with a thud; and at the end blood spurted from innumerable bites.

The whole scene was too much for most of the men; they literally howled liked famished wolves, and shook the balustrade until it creaked and groaned. Presently one slipped over, let himself lightly to the floor and charged. Others followed. All had their heart's desire. I was reminded of Swinburn's *Laus Veneris,*

"I let mine eyes have all their will of thee
I seal myself upon thee with my might."

As for the women, the ferocious glitter of their eyes was almost terrifying. One of them, true, would have joined the happy warriors below; but the butler roughly pulled her back, saying in a shocked voice, "Madame est *normale*." (I enjoyed that!) Others consoled themselves by capturing those males who were too timid to risk the jump.

I swallowed a last glass of champagne, and then "*je filai a l'Anglais*."

Summary: a pleasant time was had by all.

Note for political economists: the woman took 10,000 francs (at about 125 to the £); she took three weeks in hospital and three weeks' holiday between the shows. She was, or had been, the mistress of a Minister with "peuple" ideas, though he was an aristocrat of very old vintage; and he helped her to have her daughters brought up in one of the most exclusive convents in France.

Note

Kenneth Grant, who was doing secretarial work for Crowley around the time some of the letters in *Magick Without Tears* were written, later printed in his *Remembering Aleister Crowley* (London: Skoob, 1991) some material originally intended for this letter which he had written down in a notebook and then misplaced:

Motto for "Sore Spots"

"Il n'appartient vraiment qu'aux races dégradées
D'avoir lâchment peur des faits et des idées."

"Appelez bien plûtot sur ce qui vous effraie
Le jour qui rétablit la proportion vraie
Et dépouille l'object, à lui-mê,e réduit,
De l'aspect colossal que lui prêtait la nuit."

Ponsard. *Charlotte Corday.* Prologue.

Insert in "Sore Spots."

Here is a case in point from recent experience. In my play "The Three Wishes" one of the characters is a rich selfish woman who has exhausted every source of vicious pleasure. In here abject despair her last resource is addiction to morphine.

I gave the play to an actor, a man of the highest intelligence and the broadest views on life; he said that I could not hope to get a play licensed if it dealt with drugs, unless as a warning against their abuse—which is exactly what the play imports. The mere mention of morphine had so disturbed his judgement that he failed to realize that fact.

He interpreted her abject wail, the cynical cry of a damned soul, as a defiant assertion of compensation for her disappointments in all else.

The mere mention! There is not a line in the whole play to support any advocacy or excuse for her suicidal habit.

1) See The Hunting of the Snark by Lewis Carroll — T.S.

2) “According to Australian aboriginal folk-lore, a man-eating bellowing monster who drags his victims down to the bottom of the lake or swamp that he inhabits. It is also used to mean an 'impostor'.” (Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable, s.v. “Bunyip”

3) Lat., “a formless, huge, fearful monster.”

4) Here is a most pertinent story from I Write as I Please by my old friend, Walter Duranty. It shows how the sentimental point of view blinds its addicts to the most obvious facts.

“My friend Freddy Lyon . . . told me a story . . . of the Volga Famine. Some A.R.A. 'higher-ups' from New York were making a tour of inspection . . . Among them was a worthy but sentimental citizen who gushed about the unhappy Russians and the poor little starving children and what a privilege it was for Mr. Lyon to be doing this noble work for humanity and so on and so forth until Lyon said he was ready to choke him . . . After lunch the visitors suggested they would like to visit the cemetary. It was, said Freddy, a horrid sight, nude, dead bodies piled up ten high like faggots, because the population was so destitute that every stitch of clothing was needed for the living. The visitors were sickened by what they saw, and even the gushing one was silent as they walked back to the cemetery gate. Suddenly he caught Freddy by the arm. 'Look there!' he said, 'Is not that something to restore our faith in the goodness of God in the midst of all these horrors?' He pointed to a big woolly dog lying asleep on a grave with his head between his paws, and continued impressively. 'Faithful unto death and beyond. I have often heard of a dog refusing to be comforted when his master died, lying desolate on his grave, but I never thought to see such a thing myself.' That was too much for Freddy Lyon. 'Yes,' he said cruelly, 'but look at the dog's paws and muzzle'—they were stiff with clotted blood—'he's not mourning his master, he's sleeping off a meal.'

'At which point,' Lyon concluded his story with gusto, 'that talkative guy did the opposite of sleeping off his lunch in a very thorough manner, and there wasn't another peep out of him until we put him on the train.'”

5) Swinburne, Atalanta in Calydon.

Chapter 79

Progress

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

You will certainly have to have an india-rubber medal for persistence: this is the nth time that you have tried to catch me contradicting myself.

Well, so I do, and must, every time I make any statement whatever, as has been shown several times in this chatty little interchange of views. But that is not what you mean.

You say—permit me to condense your more than somewhat tautological, pleonastic, prolix, diffuse and incoherent elucubrations!—that the whole idea of the Great Order is based on faith in Progress. The doctrine of successive aeons is nothing else. The system of training is nothing else. Nothing, in fact, is anything else. MaugrÂ, this and in despite thereof (you continue, with a knavish gleam in your hither eye) I am everlastingly throwing down the whole jerry-built castle by my cynical reflections. (Some one—Anthony Hope in a lucid moment, I think—says that cynicism is always a confession of failure—"sour grapes.") Maybe, some of the time. But the explanation is very simple, and you ought to have been able to think it out for yourself. It is a question of the "Universe of Discourse," of Perspective. An engineer may swear himself ultra-marine in the map all the time at the daily mistakes and mishaps that go on all the time under his nose, yet at dinner tell his friends complacently that the bridge is going up better than he ever expected.

Just so, my gibes are directed at incidents; but my heart's truth is fixed on the grand spiral.

All the same, I am glad you wrote; it is a text for a little sermon that I have had in mind for a long while on the *conditions* of progress.

Number One is obviously Irregularity, Eccentricity, Disorder, the Revolutionary Spirit, Experiment.

I have no patience whatever with Utopia-mongers. Biology simply shouts at us that the happy contented community, everyone with his own (often highly specialized) job, nobody in need, nobody in danger, is necessarily stagnant. Termites and other ants, bees, beavers; these and many another have produced perfect systems. What is the first characteristic? Stupidity. "Where there is no vision, the people shall perish." What is the Fighter Termite to do, after he has been blocked out of his home? None of these communities possess any resource at all against any unforeseen unfavourable change of circumstance. (We look rather like that just now at the end of 1944 e.v.) Nor does anyone of them show any achievement; having got to the end of their biological tether, they stay out, without an aim, an idea, an effort. The leech, an insufferable pest in its belt—it has killed off tiger, rhinoceros, anything with a nostril!—is the curse of our military station at Lebong—or was when I was there. At Darjeeling, a few hundred feet higher, devil a one! They have no one to think: now how can we flourish up higher? Those old forlorn-hope Miss-Sahibs—how wide are their nostrils! Then—how?

Consider for a moment our own Empire. How did that spread all over the planet? It was the imaginative logic, the audacity, the adroit adaptability, of the Adventurer that blasted the road.

The sunny Socialist smiles his superior smile, and condescends to instruct us. That was an unfortunate, though perhaps sometimes necessary, stage in the perfection of Society.

Something in that. But there are other kinds of Adventure. My imagination can set no limit to the possibilities of Science, or of Art: our own Great Work is evidence of that.

Last Sunday I looked through an interview with the least brain-bound of these ruminators—poor old, dear old G. for gaga Bernard Shaw.

The artist, said he, was a special case. he should have a nice easy job, three or four hours a day, and be free for the rest of it to devote himself to his Art. I wonder how much of his own work would have seen daylight if he had been tied to some silly robot soul-killing, nerve- crushing, mind-infuriating routine job for even one half-hour a day! When I am on a piece of work, I grudge the time for eating; and when it's done, I need the absolute relaxation of leisured luxury.

Then what of the Work itself? If the Idea be truly new and important, God help it! The whole class of men affected jump on it with one accord, if haply they may crush it in the germ. Read a little of the History of Medicine! Any man who shows a sign of independent thought is watched, is thwarted. He persists and is threatened and bullied. He persists; every engine of oppression is set in motion against him. Then something snaps; either they succeed in killing him (Ross, who defeated malaria, nearly starved to death) or they make him a baronet, or a peer, or make his death a Day of National Mourning, and bury him in the Pantheon—"*auc grands hommes la patrie reconnaissante*"—like Pasteur after one of the most infamous campaigns of persecution in history.

Then, of course, entertainment must be standardized. It costs money to produce; and who will produce anything which can only appeal to the very few—to none at all, soon, if these swine have their way. So, if it *is* new, *is* original, *is* worth one's while, it *must* be ignored.

Besides, being new and incomprehensible to the great Us, it may be dangerous, and must be suppressed.

In all literature I know no pages so terrifying as those in Louis Marlow's *Mr. Amberthwaite*, which describe his dream. I wish I could quote it, with Sinai as the orchestra; never mind, read it again. And we are on the way—far on the way—to That!

Now, obviously, the robot education, robot textbooks stuffed in by robot teachers, will have done wonders with the help of the bovine well-being to produce a race of robot boys.

All independence, all imagination, all spirit of Adventure, will have been ground down and rolled out smooth by this ghastly engine. But—

Nature is not so easily beaten; a few boys and girls will somehow escape, and either by instinct or by observation, have the sense to keep secret. Now whatever their own peculiar genius may select as their line, they will realise that nothing is possible in any way while the accursed system stands. Their first duty is Revolt. And presently some one will come along with the wit and the will and the weapon, and blow the whole most damnable bag of tricks sky-high.

We had better busy ourselves about this while it is still possible to get back to freedom without universal bloodshed.

“All right, Master, you win! Now give us your own idea of Utopia.”

An Utopia to end Utopias? Very good, so I will. Education, to begin with; well, you've had all that in another letter. The main thing to remember is that I want every individual taught as such, according to his own special qualities. Then, teach them both sides of every question: history, for example, as the play of economic forces, also, as due to the intervention of Divine Providence, or of “Sports” of genius: and so for the rest. Train them to doubt—and to dare!

Then, somehow, as large a number of the most promising rebels should be selected to lead a life of luxury and leisure. Let every country, by dint of honouring its old traditions, be as different as possible from every other. Restore the “Grand tour,” or rather, the roving Englishman of the Nineteenth Century. Entrust them with the secrets of discipline, of authority, or power. Hardship and danger in full measure: and responsibility.

A great deal of such material will be as disgustingly wasted as it has been in the past; and there will be much abuse of privilege. But this must be allowed and allowed for; no very great harm will result, as the weak and vicious will weed themselves out.

The pure gold will repay us ten thousandfold. You ask examples? With us, the Elizabethan and the Victorian periods stand out. What is most wanted is opportunity and reward. Under Victoria there was some—taste the late Samuel Smiles Esquire, D.D. (wasn't he?)—but not enough, and Industrialism, the mother and nurse of Socialism, was destroying the soul of the people.

In my not very maternal remarks on Mother-love, was included the substance of the one wise saying of my pet American lunatic “You can't get past their biology.” This is so true, and so disheartening, that it arouses me to combat. Must we for ever be bound to the inconvenient habit of sows and cabbages? I pick up the glove.

Isn't it Aldous Huxley who says somewhere that some species or other can never develop higher powers because its brain is shut in by its carapace? I thought this too, long ago; and I went into interminable conferences with my old friend, Professor Buckmaster; I wanted to extend brain surgery to produce the phenomena of Yoga. Also, I wondered what would happened if we wedged apart the sections of the cranium at, or shortly after, birth, so as to prevent them closing and giving the brain a chance to grow.

I suspect, by the way, that something of the sort is done in China and Burma; but the object is merely to produce megalocephalic idiots as a valuable addition to the financial resources of the family.

I thought that modern physiology, with its great recent advances in knowledge of the specialized functions of the brain, might quite possibly succeed in producing genius.

You would not surprise me if you told me that something of the sort is being tried in Russia, with its Communism modelled so closely on that of Ivan the Terrible at the moment, war or no war! *Qui vivra verra*.

Anyhow, all that I really want you to get into your head "sunning over with little curls" is that Progress demands Anarchy tempered by Common Sense, and that the most formidable obstacle is this Biology.

The experience of the Magician and the Yogi does suggest that there is room in the human brain as at present constituted for almost limitless expansion. At least our system of Training is more immediately practical than digging up our Corpora Quadragenina and planting them in a Monkey's Medulla just to see what will come of it. So put down that bread-knife!

Love is the law, love under will.

Yours fraternally,

666

Chapter 80

Life a Gamble

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

In one or two—no, I think more like three or four—letters of yours to hand in the last couple of months, you have put forward various excuses for slackness, the necessities of your economic situation. You say you must have "regular work," and a "steady income" and all that sort of thing. My innocent child, that species of Magick is quite simple. Take the horns of a hare . . . That's enough for the present: I'll tell you what to do with them when you've got them.

In Macbeth we read—

> "Security
> Is mortals' chiefest enemy."

but this is another kind of security; it is the Hubris which "tempts Providence," the insolence of thinking that nothing can go wrong.

Anyhow, there's no such thing as safety. Life is a gamble. From the moment of incarnation a million accidents are possible. Miscarriage, still-birth, abortion; throughout life, until your heart beats for the last time, "you never can tell" – — — — and then you start all over again with your next incarnation!

(I wish I had a copy of a short story of mine called "Every Precaution." The gallant young Uplift Expert, the one hundred per cent red-blooded, clean-living, heir of the Eternities, takes his young fiancée and female counterpart to the "Old Absinthe House" in New Orleans to show her the terrible results of Wrong-Doing. They are going to avoid all that; their child is going to be the Quintessence of Americanism.

They marry and take a cottage by Lake Pasquaney. Presently, he being (so she said) away on a business trip, the tradesmen complained that she seemed to need very little pabulum. Somehow, people got suspicious, and sure enough, when they

broke in, they found that she had pickled him! This story is founded on fact; damn it, why did the MS have to get lost?)

Even suicide is not a "dead bird." I knew a creature once—careless observers often mistook him of a man—who tried three times, pistol, rope and poison. Something always went wrong. (Like the Babbacombe murderer, who went to the scaffold three times, and lived to a green old age!) Finally he did poison himself, by accident, when he had no intention whatever of doing anything of the sort.

Where's the *Book of Lies*? Ah, here we are. "It is Pure Chance that rules the Universe; therefore, and only therefore, life is good."[1)]

Then, is it mere fatuity and folly to make plans? Was not the IXth Atu, the Hermit, also at one time called "Prudence?"[2)] Of course. Abstract philosophy rarely coincides with common-sense. We should plan as carefully as we can; but we should always allow a margin for every conceivable accident.

Nor should we *trust* to luck, like England, when she goes to war. Bret Harte has an admirable story "The Outcasts of Poker Flat in which the "bad man," the crooked gambler, gives his life for the safety of the rest of his party, and winds up all with the remark: "Life isn't in having the luck of the cards, but in playing a poor hand well."

Yes, I daresay, all very fine; but what you wanted to know was about the propriety of taking risks in Magick.

So off we go.

Risks, we have agreed, are always unavoidable; but we can calculate them. The best and wisest man I ever knew, the late Oscar Eckenstein, was once offered a job which gave him a fifty percent chance of survival. He calmly sat down, worked out his "expectation of life," his "expectation of income," and the Lord alone knows what other factors. It came out that the pay offered was a thousand pounds or so less than he might expect normally, so he turned down the offer. Not a trace of sentiment of any kind!

Now let us consider an "A.B. case." John Jeremiah Jenkins sees a short cut to his performance of the Great work. To seize this opportunity, he must give up a steady job with good prospects and as near safety as is possible in the nature of things, for a slim chance of a career in the most insecure of all the professions.

He *can* do it; that is at the mercy of his Will; but he risks something very close to the utter wreck and ruin of his future. Only a miracle can bring him through. Just so! But is he not neglecting one factor in his problem? Who put this romantically insane opportunity in his way? The Gods: it must be, since he is performing the Great Work. Very well then! It is up to Them to watch: "he shall give his angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways: in their hands they shall bear thee up lest thou dash thy foot against a stone."

What's more, he must leave it at that; he must not insult Them by constantly looking out for extra safeguards, or "hedging." (You remember the Major in *The Suicide Club* when Prince Florizel was picking seconds for a duel? "In all my life I never so much as hedged a bet.") You must give Them plenty of opportunity to show Their approval by steering you miraculously through one crisis after another.

This course of conduct may seem to you a little like the "Act of Truth" but this is only superficially the case. The latter is usually an emergency measure, and either not particularly serious or as serious as anything can be. But what I have said above amounts really to a regular Rule of Life.

Need I add that the prime and essential requisite in all this Work is that you so devote yourself to, and identify yourself with, the Gods, that there is never any doubt in your mind as to what They intend you to do?

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

1) Chapter 22 (KB), "The Despot." In the copy of MWT I was working from it was slightly misquoted; the quote is here conformed to the second edition of The Book of Lies – T.S.

2) Note that the three other "cardinal virtues" have traditionally been referred to Tarot Trumps: Justice, Fortitude (also known as Strength) and Temperance (though Waite, in a note to Levi's Dogme et Rituel, suggests the attribution of Prudence to Atu IX was an invention of Levi's to complete the scheme; an alternative but somewhat strained suggestion has Atu XX as 'prudential judgement'). It may or may not be significant that when reformulating the Tarot in The Book of Thoth Crowley changed the names of all three of these – T.S.

Chapter 81

Method of Training

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

In your well-worn copy of the ***Bagh-i-muattar*** you have no doubt triply underlined that great verse:

"Who hath the How is careless of the Why,"

which shows how cunning I was to induce you to put all your "why" questions first.

But now let us get down to *orichalc taques*, as the Norman peasant might say.

The first and absolutely essential task for the Aspirant is to write his Magical Record.

You know some elementary Mechanics—the Triangle of Forces, and all that. Well, if we have a body acted on by two equal forces, one pulling it East, the other south, it will tend to move in a south-Easterly direction. But if the "south" force is (say) twice as strong, it will move south of South-East.

Now you, sitting in your study reading this letter, got there and were compelled to do that, as the result of the impact upon you of countless quintillions of forces of every kind. I don't expect you to discover all these and calculate and report them; but I want you to set down all the main currents. For so you should be able to get some sort of answer to the question Where do we go from here, boys?

I am not a guesser; and I cannot judge you, or advise you, or help you, unless and until I know the facts as thoroughly as you are able to allow me to do.

The construction of this Record is, incidentally, the first step in the practice called Sammasati, and leads to the acquisition of the Magical Memory—the memory of your previous incarnations. So there is another reason, terrifically cogent, for writing this Magical Record as clearly and as fully as you can.

This best explanation of how to set about the task is given in Liber Thisharb.

Some of this sounds rather advanced and technical; but it ought to give you the general idea. You should begin with your parents and the family traditions; the circumstances of your birth and education; your social position; your financial situation; your physique, health, illnesses; your vita sexualis; your hobbies and amusements; what you are good at, what not; how you came to be interested in the Great Work; what (if you have been on false trails, Toshophists, Anthroposophagists, sham Rosicrucians, etc.) has been "your previous condition of servitude;" how you found me, and decided to enlist my aid.

That, by itself, helps you to understand yourself, and me to understand you.

From that point the keeping of the Record is quite easy. All you have to do is to put down what practices you mean to begin, how you get on with them from day to day, and (at intervals) what I have to say about your progress.

Remember always that we have no use for piety, for vague chatter, for guesswork; we are as strictly scientific as biologists or chemists.

We ban emotion from the start; we demand perception; and (as you will see later on) even perception is not acceptable until we have made sure of its bases by a study of what we call the "tendencies."

That is all about the Magical Record; the way is now clear to set forth our Method. This is two-fold. (1) Yoga, introversion, (2) Magick, extroversion. (These are rough but useful connotations.) The two seem, at first glance, to be opposed; but, when you have advanced a little in both, you find that the concentration learnt in Yoga is of immense use in attaining the mental powers necessary in magick; on the other hand, the discipline of Magick is of the greatest service in Yoga.

Let me remark, by the way, that to my mind one of the greatest beauties, and most encouraging confirmations of the validity of our system, is the matchless harmony of its elements. Always, when we pursue any one path to its end, we find that it has become one with some other path which at the outset appeared utterly irreconcilable with it.

("Write down that the tearing apart *is* the crushing together" comes from an actual experience. See //Liber 418//, *The Vision and the Voice*, which teems with similar

passages, and is itself an outstanding example of the unity of the Yogic and the Magical methods.)

To study Yoga, you have my //Book 4 Part I// and my //Eight Lectures on Yoga//. Then there is Vivekananda's *Raja Yoga* and several little-known Hindu writers; these latter are very practical and technical, but one really needs to be a Hindu to make much use of them. The former is very good indeed, if your remember to switch off when he slides into sloppiness, which luckily is not often.

To study Magick, *Book 4*, Parts II, III (*Magick in Theory and Practice*) and IV (*The Equinox of the Gods*.)[1] Add *The Book of Thoth* and there you are:—

"Being furnished with complete armour and armed, he is similar to the goddess.[2]

Of other writers, you have *The Book of the Sacred Magic of Abramelin the Mage*, and any of the works of Eliphaz Lévi. But that's all.

But—I suppose you knew all this long ago. It may help if I try to expound the essence of these two Methods in very simple language, and very *different language*. By contrast and comparison, you should be able, without reading even one of all those books, to get a perfectly clear idea in perspective of "what's coming to you!"

The process of analysing, developing and controlling the mind is the essence of all Yoga practices.

Magick explores and learns to control those regions of Nature which lie beyond the objects of sense. Reaching the highest parts of these regions, called the divine, one proceeds by the exaltation (? = intoxication? Yes, of a sublime sort) of the consciousness to identify oneself with those "celestial" Beings.

In Yoga, various practices prevent the body and its functions from interrupting the mental process. Then, one inhibits that process itself: the stilling of "thoughts" allows one to become aware of mental functions beyond the intellectual; these functions have their own peculiar properties and powers. Each sheath, as one goes deeper, is discarded as "unreal;" finally one apprehends that nothing which is the only true and real form of existence. (But then it does *not* exist: in these regions of thought words always become nightmares of self-contradiction. This is as it should be.)

In Magick, on the contrary, one passes through the veil of the exterior world (which, as in Yoga, but in another sense, becomes "unreal" by comparison as one

passes beyond) one creates a subtle body (instrument is a better term) called the body of Light; this one develops and controls; it gains new powers as one progresses, usually by means of what is called “initiation:” finally, one carries on almost one's whole life in this Body of Light, and achieves in its own way the mastery of the Universe.

The first step in Yoga is “Keep still.”

The first step in Magick is “Travel beyond the world of the senses.”

There, that is the whole business in a nutshell, and expressed so that anyone, however ignorant of the subject, may grasp the essentials (I hope).

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

1) For the whole history of the conception and execution of the monsterpiece known as Book 4, see the editor's introduction to the 1994 and 1997 Samuel Weiser edition, Magick: Book 4 parts I-IV, popularly known as the “Blue Brick.” Crowley had originally intended part IV, “*ΘΕΛΗΜΑ*—the Law” to comprise The Book of the Law and his final commentary thereon. Symonds and Grant erroneously identified it with the edition of the commentaries which they edited (Magical and Philosophical Commentaries on The Book of the Law, Montreal: 93 Publishing, 1974). The Equinox of the Gods was not designated as part of Book 4 on first publication, rather as Equinox vol. III no. 3; as far as I am aware, this letter of MWT is the first published reference to it as Book 4 part IV – T.S.

2) A quote from the Chaldæan Oracles, as cited by Proclus in Platonic Theology. Fragment 171 in the Westcott edition. The goddess in question is probably Hekaté. Johnston in Hekate Soteira renders it “For I have come, a goddess in full armour and with weapons,” making Hekaté herself the speaker – T.S.

Chapter 82

Epistola Penultima: The Two Ways to Reality

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

How very sensible of you, though I admit somewhat exacting!

You write—Will you tell me exactly why I should devote so much of my valuable time to subjects like Magick and Yoga.

That is all very well. But you ask me to put it in syllogistic form. I have no doubt this can be done, though the task seems somewhat complicated. I think I will leave it to you to construct your series of syllogisms yourself from the arguments of this letter.

In your main question the operative word is “valuable. Why, I ask, in my turn, should you consider your time valuable? It certainly is not valuable unless the universe has a meaning, and what is more, unless you know what that meaning is—at least roughly—it is millions to one that you will find yourself barking up the wrong tree.

First of all let us consider this question of the meaning of the universe. It is its own evidence to design, and that design intelligent design. There is no question of any moral significance—”one man's meat is another man's poison“ and so on. But there can be no possible doubt about the existence of some kind of intelligence, and that kind is far superior to anything of which we know as human.

How then are we to explore, and finally to interpret this intelligence?

It seems to me that there are two ways and only two. Imagine for a moment that you are an orphan in charge of a guardian, inconceivably learned from your point of view. Suppose therefore that you are puzzled by some problem suitable to your childish nature, your obvious and most simple way is to approach your guardian

and ask him to enlighten you. It is clearly part of his function as guardian to do his best to help you. Very good, that is the first method, and close parallel with what we understand by the word Magick. We are bothered by some difficulty about one of the elements—say Fire—it is therefore natural to evoke a Salamander to instruct you on the difficult point. But you must remember that your Holy Guardian Angel is not only far more fully instructed than yourself on every point that you can conceive, but you may go so far as to say that it is definitely his work, or part of his work; remembering always that he inhabits a sphere or plane which is entirely different from anything of which you are normally aware.

To attain to the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel is consequently without doubt by far the simplest way by which you can yourself approach that higher order of being.

That, then, is a clearly intelligible method of procedure. We call it Magick.

It is of course possible to strengthen the link between him and yourself so that in course of time you became capable of moving and, generally speaking, operating on that plane which is his natural habitat.

There is however one other way, and one only, as far as I can see, of reaching this state. It is at least theoretically possible to exalt the whole of your own consciousness until it becomes as free to move on that exalted plane as it is for him. You should note, by the way, that in this case the postulation of another being is not necessary. There is no way of refuting the solipsism if you feel like that. Personally I cannot accede to its axiom. The evidence for an external universe appears to me perfectly adequate.

Still there is no extra charge for thinking on those lines if you so wish.

I have paid a great deal of attention in the course of my life to the method of exalting the human consciousness in this way; and it is really quite legitimate to identify my teaching with that of the Yogis.

I must however point out that in the course of my instruction I have given continual warnings as to the dangers of this line of research. For one thing there is no means of checking your results in the ordinary scientific sense. It is always perfectly easy to find a subjective explanation of any phenomenon; and when one considers that the greatest of all the dangers in any line of research arise from egocentric vanity, I do not think I have exceeded my duty in anything that I have said to deter students from undertaking so dangerous a course as Yoga.

It is, of course, much safer if you are in a position to pursue in the Indian Jungles, provided that your health will stand the climate and also, I must say, unless you have a really sound teacher on whom you can safely rely. But then, if we once introduce a teacher, why not go to the Fountain-head and press towards the Knowledge and conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel?

In any case your Indian teacher will ultimately direct you to seek guidance from that source, so it seems to me that you have gone to a great deal of extra trouble and incurred a great deal of unnecessary danger by not leaving yourself in the first place in the hands of the Holy Guardian Angel.

In any case there are the two methods which stand as alternatives. I do not know of any third one which can be of any use whatever. Logically, since you have asked me to be logical, there is certainly no third way; there is the external way of Magick, and the internal way of Yoga: there you have your alternatives, and there they cease.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

666

Chapter 83

Epistola Ultima

Cara Soror,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

The suggestion in your last letter to me is a very sensible one. I do think that people in general would like to get some idea of my system of training as a whole, in a comprehensive form. In the past there has been far too much of referring them to one quite unprocurable document and then to another which probably has not even been written. No wonder that they go away sorrowful. So I am going to put in as the last of this series of Letters an account, as clear and as succinct as the gods enable me to do, of what they may expect to have to do to get good marks from Grandfather. Of course I shall not be able to avoid altogether reference to the various official documents, but I will make these as short and as few as I can.

First of all then, my system can be divided into two parts. Apparently diametrically opposed, but at the end converging, the one helping the other until the final method of progress partakes equally of both elements.

For convenience I shall call the first method Magick, and the second method Yoga. The opposition between these is very plain for the direction of Magick is wholly outward, that of Yoga wholly inward.

I will deal first then with Magick. How do I define this word?

Magick is the science and art of causing change to occur in accordance with the will. (Obviously then all scientific methods can be included in this term.)

I have to assume in all that follows that you have thoroughly understood the doctrine of 0 = 2.

All Magical action may be classed as under the formula of progression from the "0" to the "2"; in other words it is complete extraversion.

The aspiring Magician only analyses himself for the purpose of finding new worlds to conquer. His first objective is the astral plane; its discovery, the classification of its tenants, and their control.

All his early practises therefore are devoted to exploring the worlds which surround (if you choose, or if your prefer—are contained in) the object of sense. If there is a tree in your garden, you want to find out whether that tree is occupied by a nymph or a nat, and if so, what are they like? How do they act? How can you make them useful to your purpose? It is in fact the ordinary every-day scientific method of exploration. The only difference is that in the course of one's experiments one becomes aware of parts of the nature of the object to be examined which are subtler and perhaps more powerful, nearer to reality, than those which ordinary scientific examination discloses. You will notice, however, that the qualities above-mentioned are identical. The chemical elements which go to form a tree are subtler, more powerful and nearer to reality than the tree as it is presented to the senses.

Finally, we reach the conception of molecules, atoms, electrons, protons, neutrons and so on, and nobody needs telling nowadays what unfathomable potencies lie hidden in the atom.

When I say subtler, moreover, I mean it. The analysis of matter has resulted in the extraordinary discovery that the definition of matter as given by the physicist of to-day is very similar indeed to the definition of spirit as stated by the mystics of the middle ages.

Henry Poincaré has well pointed out that the results of scientific experiment as we know them, are altogether in their way dependant on the existence of our own peculiar natures. If, for example, we had no sense to use in our exploration but that of hearing, we should have worked out a classification of trees entirely different from that which we now possess. We should have taught our students how to distinguish the sounds made by an oak and an elm respectively in a storm; the differences in the rustling of various kinds of grass, and so on.

Similarly the results of our magical experiments are naturally and necessarily very distinct from those which we obtain by ordinary methods. To begin with we must build up an apparatus of examination, and this we do by discovering and developing qualities in our own structure which ware suitable for the purpose.

The first step is the separation of (what we call, for convenience) the astral body from the physical body. As our experiments proceed, we find that our astral body itself can be divided into grosser and subtler components. In this way we become aware of the existence of what we call, for convenience, the Holy Guardian Angel, and the more we realise the implications of the theory of the existence of such a being, the clearer it becomes that our supreme task is to put ourselves into intimate communication with him.

For one thing, we shall find that in the object of sense which we examine there are elements which resist our examination. We must raise ourselves to a plane in which we obtain complete control of such.

It is found furthermore in the course of experiment that a great many of the apparent differences in our study conceal a hidden unity, and vice versa. Like every other science, both the subject and the object of the work increase as that work proceeds.

Take a simple matter like Mathematics as our analogy. The schoolboy struggling with the Rule of Three is a very rudimentary image of the advanced mathematician working on the differential calculus.

From the above it ought to be clear to you that I have said all that really needs to be said in explaining the whole of Magick as the science and art of extending, first in oneself, one's own faculties, secondly in external nature their hidden characteristics.

Before closing the subject entirely I think it well to point out that there are quite a number of worlds on which a good deal of work remains to be done. In particular I cannot refrain from mentioning the work of Dr. Dee and Sir Edward Kelly. My own work on this subject has been so elaborate and extensive that I shall never sufficiently regret that I never had an opportunity of completing it, but I should like to emphasize that the obtaining of a book like *Liber 418* is in itself so outstanding an achievement that it should serve as an encouragement to all Magicians.

In the case of many worlds, in particular that of Abra Melin, of the greater and lesser Keys of Solomon, of Pietro di Abano, of Cornelius Agrippa, while we have perfectly adequate information as to the methods we have very meagre examples of the results, especially so far as refers to the technical side of the work.

I must conclude with a warning. So many of these branches of magick are so fascinating that any one of them is liable to take hold of the Magician by the short

hair and upset his balance completely. It should never be forgotten for a single moment that the central and essential work of the Magicians is the attainment of the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel. Once he has achieved this he must of course be left entirely in the hands of that Angel, who can be invariably and inevitably relied upon to lead him to the further great step—crossing of the abyss and the attainment of the grade of Master of the Temple.

Anything apart from this course is a side issue and unless so regarded may lead to the complete ruin of the whole work of the Magician.

II

The second part of this letter, which appears to be expanding into a sort of essay, will be devoted to Yoga. You will have noticed that the grade of Master of the Temple is itself intimately associated with Yoga. It is when one reaches this plane that the apparently contradictory forms of the Great Work, Magick and Yoga, begin to converge, though even earlier in the course of the work it must have been noticed that achievements in Yoga have been of great assistance to magical operations, and that many of the mental states necessary to the development of the Magician are identical with those attained in the course of the strictly technical Yogic operations.

The literature necessary to the study of Magick is somewhat variegated; there are quite a number of classics on the subject and though it would be easy enough for me to draw up a list of not more than half-a dozen which I consider really essential, there may be as many as an hundred which in the more or less subsidiary forms are useful to the magician.

With Yoga the case is very different indeed. The literature on the subject is so enormous and contains so vast a number of more or less secret documents which circulate from hand to hand, that I believe that the best advice I can give anyone is to cut one's cloth very sparingly if one is to make a fitting suit. I do not think I am going too far if I say that Part I of *Book 4* and my *Eight Lectures on Yoga* form an absolutely sufficient guide to the useful practise of the subject; anything else is almost certain to operate as a distraction.

Swami Vivekananda summarised Yoga under four headings, and I do not think that one can improve on that classification. His four are: Gnana, Raja, Bhakti and Hatha, and comprise all divisions that it is desirable to make. As soon as one begins to add such sections as Mantra Yoga, you are adding to without enriching

the classification, and once you begin where are you to stop? But I honestly believe that the excessive simplication given in *Eight Lectures on Yoga* is a practical advantage. Any given type of Yogas is the work of a lifetime and for that reason alone it is desirable to confine oneself from the beginning to an absolutely simple programme.

What then is the difference between Yoga and Magick? Magick is extraversion, the discovery of and subsequently the classification of and finally the control of new worlds on new planes. So far as it concerns the development of the mind its object and method are perfectly simple. What is wanted is exaltation. The aim is to identify oneself with the highest essence of whatever world is under consideration.

With Yoga you might easily slip into saying that it was identical, with the exception that the new worlds are from the start recognised as already existing within the human cosmos, but nobody is asked to extend these worlds in any way; on the contrary the object is to analyse ever more minutely, and the control to which one approaches is not external but internal. At all times one is concentrated on the idea of simplication. The recognition of any new idea or form of ideas, is invariably the signal for its rejection: "not that, not that."

One might simplify this explanation by constructing some sort of apophthegm; Magick is the journey from 0 to 2, Yoga from 2 to 0. It is a very good rule for the Yogi to keep this mind constantly fixed on the fact that any idea soever is false. There is actually a Hindu proverb "That which can be thought is not true." Consequently the existence of any idea in the mind is an immediate refutation of it, but equally the contraries as well as contradictory of that idea are false, and the result of this is to knock the second law of formal logic to pieces.[1)]

One puts up a sort of sorites—A is B, therefore A is not B; therefore not A is not B; and all these contrary statements are equally false, but in order to realise this fact they must themselves be announced by the mind as ecstatic discoveries of truth.

The result of all this naturally is that the mind very rapidly becomes a discredited instrument, and one attains to a totally different and much more exalted type of mind, and the same destructive criticism which one applied to the original consciousness applies equally to this higher consciousness, and one gets to one higher still which is again destroyed. In *The Equinox*, Vol. I there is an essay

called "The Soldier and the Hunchback: ! and ?" In *Liber Aleph* too there are several chapters about attainment by what is called the Method of Ladders.[2)]

All these operations are equally valid and equally invalid, and the result of this is that the whole subject of Yoga leads to constantly increasing confusion. The fineness of the analytical instrument seems to defeat its own purpose and it is perhaps because of that confession that I have always felt in my deepest consciousness that the method of Magick is on the whole less dangerous than that of Yoga. This is particularly the case when discussing these matters with a Western mind.

It is true that our 0 = 2 formula remains infinitely useful because it is of such potency in destroying the scepticism which so often disheartens one, especially in the highest realms of The criticism which the enemy directs against your sun-kissed tower is thrown back from those glittering walls. You accept the criticism at the same time as you dismiss it with a laugh.

On the whole therefore I continue to regard the discipline of Yoga as its most valuable feature. The results attained by pushing Yoga to its end are on their own showing worthless, whereas the attainment of Magick, however lofty, is still immune to all criticism and at every period of its construction has been perfectly sympathetic with the normal consciousness of man.

On this view indeed, one might laughingly remark that Yoga at its best is a smoke-screen thrown out by a battleship in self-protection.

It may seem to you strange as you read this letter to have watched how the pendulum has swung always a little more and more towards the side of Magick. I do not know why this should have been, but that it is so I have no doubt whatever. I see quite clearly now that Yoga from its very first beginnings is liable to lead the mind away into a condition of muddle, and though for each such state Yoga itself provides the necessary cure, may not one ask oneself if it is really wise to begin one's work with axioms and postulates which are inherently dangerous. The whole controversy might be expressed as a differential equation. Their curves become identical only at infinity, and there is no doubt, at least to my mind, that the curve of Magick follows a more pleasant track than that of Yoga.

To take one point alone: it is evidently more satisfactory to have one's malignant demons external to oneself.

As I have written it has become clearer to me that this is the case, but I should not like you to arise from its perusal with any idea that I have been in some way derogating Yoga I would not like to maintain that it is necessary to Magick because there have been many very great magicians who knew nothing at all of the subject but I am just as strongly convinced as I was before that the practice of Yoga in itself is of enormous assistance to the Magician in his more intelligible path, only adding that he should beware lest the logical antinomies inherent in Yoga divert him from or discourage him in his simple path.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,

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1) The reference is presumably to the law of non-contradiction, ~(A & ~A); or possibly to the law of Excluded Middle, (A v ~A) – T.S.

2) The reference is probably to the sequence of chapters Digamma-tau (177) to Digamma-omega (182) – T.S.

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COLLECTED WORKS These works contain many mystical and magical secrets, both stated clearly in prose, and woven into the Robe of sublimest poesy. A reprint was issued in the 1970s by the Yogi Publication Society, and can be found here.

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EQUINOX, The Vol. I, No. 1 - 10
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LIBER 418—THE VISION AND THE VOICE First published in *Equinox* I (5). A new publication was issued subsequently with the full text, an Introduction, and extensive Commentary by The Master Therion. A new edition of the text and Crowley's commentary was included in *Equinox* IV (2). Liber 418 can be found here

LIBER LEGIS—THE BOOK OF THE LAW This Book is the foundation of the New Aeon, and thus of the whole Work. In *Equinox* I (10), *The Equinox of the Gods*, *Equinox* III (9) (*The Holy Books of Thelema*) and other editions too numerous to list. Online here.

LIBER VII—THE BOOK OF LAPIS LAZULI Gives in magical language an account of the initiation of a Master of the Temple. This is the only parallel, for beauty of ecstasy, to *The Book of the Heart Girt with the Serpent*. In *Equinox* III (9) (*The Holy Books of Thelema*). Online here.

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777 A complete Dictionary of the correspondences of all magical elements. It is to the language of occultism what Webster is to the English language. An expanded edition with essays and explanatory notes by Crowley was issued in the 1950s and is currently available as part of *777 and other Qabalistic Writings* (formerly called *The Qabalah of Aleister Crowley*), published by Weiser, and can be found online here.

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